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THE
HISTORY
OF
CHARLOTTE SUMMERS,
THE
Fortunate PARISH GIRL.

The SECOND EDITION Corrected.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

Printed for the AUTHOR;

Sold by CORBETT, the Publisher, at *Addi-
son's Head*, opposite *St. Dunstan's Church*, in
Fleet-street.

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THE



THE
HISTORY
OF A
PARISH GIRL.

BOOK III.
Containing an unfortunate Period of
Miss Summers's Life.

CHAP. I.

Containing a Dissertation on Dreaming.

A DISSERTATION on Dreaming!
What the Duce does the Fellow
mean? What have we to do with
Dreaming? says *Dick Dapperwit*, in a
Passion, pray leave off Fooling, and go on
with your *History of the Parish Girl*, and
take some other Opportunity to tell us your
VOL. II. B Dreams.

Dreams.—Not so fast, good Mr. *Dapperwit*, we have more to do with Dreams than you imagine ; and now the Crotchet is in my Head, you must hear what I have to offer on that Subject patiently, or turn over to another Chapter, where, for your Punishment, you will find nothing but Dreams : For what, pray, have we been doing all this while, but telling our Dreams ? Its true, they are the Dreams of Men awake, yet they differ very little from our sleeping Reveries. What are all the Works of the ancient and modern Poets, but so many regular Dreams, where the Poets have left out all the incoherent Starts of the Imagination, so common in our sleeping Labours, and entertained us with no more of their fanciful Reveries, than they could reduce to a regular Series, attended with all the Circumstances of Time and Place.

Were you to read my worshipful Father's Common-Place Book, or the first rude Draught of his celebrated *Tom Jones*, and view the indigested Chaos from whence that inimitable Work was extracted, you could not distinguish it from the most incoherent Dream you ever had in your Life. There you see a Thought in Embrio, without Form or Figure ; a Simile in the Bud, without any

any apparent Resemblance to any Thing in Nature ; there you may see the Limbs, and several Members of a Character, dispersed in Miniature, without any Connexion or Coherence ; or if any occur, perhaps that which is very unseemly ; for sometimes you may meet with a half-finished Limb of the chaste Miss *Western*, lying without any Emotion next an uncloathed Member of the wicked *Tom Jones*. In short, I can give you no other Idea of the first Thought of a Poet, but to lead you to the Statuary's near *Hyde-Park-Corner*, where, in his Shop, you see Legs, Arms, Heads and Trunks, some finished, some rudely blocked out, all lying higgledy piggledy, without any Order or Regularity ; yet, when put together in their proper Places, give you the Image of a *Cæsar*, a *Marc Antony*, or *Cleopatra*, a Man of Courage or a Coward, a Clown or a fine Gentleman, a Saint or a Devil, just as the Materials happen to be united. Indeed, there is this material Difference between the Figure-maker's Shop and the Repository of a Poet, that the Figure-maker has nothing in his Custody but what must turn out something ; when he makes a Head, though he does not know whether the Head is designed for a Saint or a Soldier, yet he is sure it must turn out a Head for somebody : But the Poet has a thousand Vagaries in his Pericranium, that

perhaps, he can never find an Opportunity to convert to any Use in Nature, but must remain upon his Hands as so much Lumber, that frequently rather embarrasses, than forwards his Work.

The Antients had an Opinion of Poets, which seem to bear harder upon that Class of Men, than my supposing them Dreamers; for they would scarce allow that Judgment, or common Sense, had any thing to do with poetick Compositions; but that the Professors of that Art were no better than Madmen, or at best Enthusiasts, who vented the enthusiastick Reveries of an overheated Imagination. And the Poets themselves, in these Days, were so far from being ashamed of being reputed mad, that they assumed the Garb and Deportment of Lunatics: But I am not inclinable to go so far, as to suppose that my Brethren the Inhabitants of *Parnassus* are downright mad, though they may have a little Spice of Madness in their Composition, but, with the Antients, I contend, that the Judgment or Understanding has nothing to do with poetick Invention, but that the Whole is the Work of the Imagination, which is always at work, whether sleeping or waking, and acts spontaneous, without receiving any Laws

Laws from, or submitting to any Rules formed by the Will or Understanding.

Let the wisest Poet of them all sit down and command his Imagination to form a Fable according to any fixed Rule, and try if he is obeyed any more, when awake in his Study, than when fast asleep in his Bed. He will find that he is not—but that the disobedient Fancy forms just what Images it pleases, perhaps as remote from the Intention as *London* is from *Bantam*. He may endeavour to direct his Thoughts to some Object or Idea simular to his View, and something may occur from that forced Assemblage of Ideas, like what he wants; but that is not Invention, it is mere Memory, and the Fable resulting from thence is stolen from something he has formerly read or seen, and is none of his own. What must he do then? He must wait till the Imagination hits voluntarily upon what he wants, which it may do when he is asleep, as well as when he is awake; but it may chance, that he may sleep all his Life-time before he Dreams just as he would: To remedy this, he watches every Salley of the Imagination, and commits the rude Thought to Writing, without troubling his Head about the Connection, and when he has collected

lected a vast Heap of these incoherent Fancies, he sits down and picks a Thought from one Place, a Simile from another, a Limb here, and a Member there, till he has formed the Similitude of a Character, which from the Heap he cloaths with Diction, Sentiment, and every thing else, to constitute it what he intends it should resemble. It is here the Judgment and Understanding are employed, in picking, chusing, and rejecting the Materials which the Imagination has furnished. If the Imagination is naturally barren, and that the Man has dreamed but sparingly, the poetick Issue, in spite of all the Wisdom on Earth, turns out a poor, lean, meager, starved, and decrepit Vision; and if he has dreamed abundantly, and collected a large Share of sleeping or waking Reveries, but woult Judgment to pick, chuse, and digest his Materials, the Production proves monstrous, out of shape, and unnatural.

Therefore I desire that no Man may speak disrespectful of Dreams for the future, since I have made it manifest, that to Dreams we owe the greatest Pleasure, and the most valuable Production the learned World is possessed of; and I myself have found so much Advantage from my sleeping Dreams, as well
as

as waking Reveries, that it is the second Office of the Day to recollect the Dream of the preceding Night, which I commit to Writing in all its Circumstances ; and from thence I have, from Time to Time, culled some very valuable Materials for the Entertainment and Edification of the Public. I took the first Hint of this Practice from my Father's Common-Place Book. I had stole one Day into his Study, not in Search of Knowledge, but of something that was not to be found in so great Abundance in that Place, as Wit and Learning, and chanced to cast my Eye on a large Folio Manuscript, of which I turned over several Leaves, and met with the most odd and incoherent Flights that ever I dreamed in my Life. I was sometime flying in the Water, swimming in the Air, dancing on my Head ; now in *England*, and in the Dash of a Pen transported to both the Poles ; now I soar'd aloft, and brush'd the Moon with my Wings, and the next Moment sunk to the Centre. I could make neither Head nor Tail of it, but concluded that it was a Book of Dreams, for which from my Infancy I had conceived a wonderful Veneration ; and from that Moment determined to keep a Register of the nocturnal Excursions of my Imagination, with a View only, at that

B 4

Time,

Time, to mark the Interpretation and Events of those dark Oracles.— But since that Time I have found them of much more Value to me than the Responses of the *Delphic* Oracles ; for there is scarce a Character in Life, but what my nocturnal Diary can supply me with a becoming Dress fit to cloath them in. Thus the Reader sees that whether I am asleep or awake, I am always employed in something to his Advantage. I wish I could recommend it to my female Readers, to take the Trouble to commit to Writing some of their sleeping or waking Dreams : (What a foolish Fancy is this !) By it they might learn to dream regularly, and might see in their Sleep a Novel as Entertaining as any ever wrote by Mrs. *Behn* or *Haywood*, and conveying, perhaps, as good a Moral ; from whence they might learn more than they do at present, by straining Interpretations to favour their Curiosity to peep into Futurity : For I am of Opinion, that it is the Fault of the Memory, and not of the Imagination, that our Dreams appear so incoherent and distorted : For where that Faculty is left to itself, without the Impulse of outward Objects, I believe there will appear a Chain or Connection among the Images it forms. When awake, and we give Way to our
Ima-

Imagination, Experience teaches every Man, that there is an apparent Connection amongst the Ideas ; I believe it must be the same Thing when we sleep, only the Impression on the Memory is so weak, the Chain and Coherence is frequently forgot, while some glaring Fancy, seemingly without Meaning, is remembered. How strongly active is that Principle which informs the human Being ! It is never at Rest, always in Action, always thinking, and contemplating Objects really in Existence, or forming others by its creative Power, capable of entertaining and exercising its Faculties. But now that I have hinted to the Ladies a new Employment for their Dreams ; and taught my Brethren, who live upon the airy Diet of Invention, how to convert their sleeping Hours to the Advantage of their waking Labours, I shall lay me down to rest, and try what more I can Dream of pretty Miss *Summers*.

CHAP. II.

A Conversation between Miss Summers and her two Lovers, of very little Moment to any but such as have Souls capable of relishing the Social Flame.

THE next Day after the Conversation mentioned in the Close of the first Volume between Lady Bountiful and Mr. Crofts, after Breakfast, the Lady Bountiful, Mr. Crofts, and Miss Summers, were sitting together, for Sir Thomas had left the Room on some Business; the Lady Bountiful rose up, and told Miss Summers,—I believe, Miss, Mr. Crofts has something particular to say to you; I advise you to listen to him as one I have a particular Esteem for, and who is every way qualified to make you happy;—and then left the Room without waiting for an Answer, which, indeed, Miss was very incapable of framing. She was so thunderstruck with a Speech, which had more of the Peremptory in it than any she had heard of a long Time from her indulgent Benefactress. She sat silent, with her Eyes fixed on the Ground, with the Tears ready to burst. Mr. Crofts saw her Disorder,

der, and was quite at a Loss for Words to enter upon a Subject, he guessed by her Looks, would be highly disagreeable.—— Why, Miss *Summers*, that Face of Sorrow? Is it possible, that the very Thoughts of my having the Liberty to entertain you with my Passion, should give you so much Uneasiness? Tell me, cruel Fair, in what Language I shall attempt your Heart, that may be least offensive to your Delicacy; tell me what I shall do to convince you with how pure and ardent a Flame I adore you; for, by Heavens! I seek but your Happiness; to sooth your Breast into Peace and Joy, and to restore you that calm Tranquility I found you enjoy'd when I first came to this Place.—— Would to God you could, reply'd Miss *Summers*, with a deep Sigh, but, alas! it is in vain for me to hope the Return of those Days of Peace.—— Why so, dear Madam? If my Fortune can contribute to your Quiet, I lay it at your Feet; and if you permit me, I shall make it the whole Study of my Life to make you happy. Suffer me, Madam, but to endeavour by the most obsequious Services, to cure you of those Prejudices you seem to entertain against me, and warm you into Love and Happiness. That Aversion you would express cannot be natural to you; you are all Softness and amiable Good-

ness to others, why am I the only Man to be cursed with your Hatred, who can have no relish of Happiness without you? — Cease, for God's Sake! replied Miss *Summers* hastily, to torment me with a fruitless Passion; our Affections are not in our own Power: That Happiness you speak of, we cannot communicate to each other; the Union you want would make us both wretched; therefore I conjure you, if you would not drive me to some Act of Madness, not to mention any more the hateful Subject;—and then flung out of the Room in great Disorder, and went up to her own Apartment; where she had not been long, before Sir *Thomas* entered. She blushed at the Sight of him; for at that Moment she was figuring to herself how happy she would Esteem herself, if Lady *Bountiful* had said as much in Favour of his Suit, as she had offered in Behalf of *Crofts*.

Sir *Thomas* approached her with great Deference, as conscious to himself he had given her Cause of Displeasure at the last Interview. — Forgive me, Madam, said he, that I thus encroach upon your Privacy, but I cannot longer refrain acknowledging the Madness of my Behaviour the last Time I had an Opportunity to speak to you alone,
and

and intreat for Forgiveness: For, Oh Miss *Summers*! I cannot live without your Esteem: how then can I support your Hatred?—It is impossible, replied Miss *Summers*, that Sir *Thomas* can do any thing to make me hate him; I cannot be so ungrateful, but to esteem the Man to whose Family I am indebted for every Thing I am. If that can make you easy, Sir *Thomas*, you have as much, as a Heart full of Gratitude for the greatest Obligations, can bestow: But urge no farther; for all beyond That, is impossible.—Ah! why should I be content with cold Esteem? That you may bestow on my Mother; but, Miss *Summers*, I can claim no less than your warmest Affection: Yes, lovely Maid, you must go that one Step further; and bless me, by owning that you love the Man you esteem. Where is the Unreasonableness of that Request, to ask a Return of Affection to the Man who doats on you, and has no Being but what subsists on the Hopes of being for ever happy in your Charms? I see, my Charmer, kneeling and snatching her Hand which he pressed to his Bosom, I see it in your dear Eyes; I feel it by Sympathy, that I am not indifferent to you; let me be here rooted for ever, and thus dart my whole Soul into your Bosom, till you confess the ravishing Truth.—

Rise,

Rise, said Miss *Summers*, covered over with a Crimson Blush, I cannot see the Son of my Benefactress in this humble Posture. Rise, Sir, and resume yourself, and think but what you ask, and think what ought to be my Answer: Considering my Circumstances, what would it avail you, were I to own that you are far from being indifferent to me, and that your Happiness is as dear to me as my own? What would it, I say, avail you to know this, when you know the unfurmountable Bars that lie betwixt us; Obstacles that never can be removed, not so much as in Hope, unless you can reverse the Order of Nature, and call back the Records of past Time that has stamped me with the indelible Character of a Child of Charity, and the Object of your Family's Bounty? Circumstances, Sir *Thomas*, which would brand me with the blackest Ingratitude were I to indulge your fond Passion, contrary to the Opinion of your Mamma, to whose tender Care of my helpless Youth I can never make so black a Return. Cease then, Sir *Thomas*, to think of me in any other Shape than as your Friend; assist me even against yourself, to discharge in some Measure the manifold Obligations I owe to the kindest, tenderest and best of Women.

How

How unreasonable are you, Miss *Summers*, cry'd Sir *Thomas*, half crying, to ask me to assist you against myself? Do you think I can see you become the Property of another; see my Rival riot in those Charms in which all my present and future Hopes of Happiness are centered, merely to gratify the Pride of a doating Parent, and to humour the Caprice of an enthusiastic Virtue? No! it is impossible I should bear the Thought without Destruction; give me then but Time to soften that obdurate Breast, and to combat with my Services, that chimerical Virtue which bars my Happiness: This you may, nay, you must grant me, if you have the least Value for my Repose; I swear, my dear Charmer, (kneeling once more) I never shall rise from this Posture, till you have promised not to yield to the Importunities of *Crofts*; grant me but this, and my Passion shall be silent as the Grave, my Lips shall be for ever sealed, till by my Actions I have convinced you how much I love, and that Circumstances shall concur to allow my Fair to give me her Hand, consistent with those rigid Rules which she has laid down as the Principles of her Conduct.—It is easy for me, replied Miss *Summers*, to make you that Promise, Sir *Thomas*, since I find in my
Breast

Breast such a rooted Aversion to that Name, that I can scarce hear it with Temper ; but don't take it as an Encouragement for your Addresses to me ; that I can never give without your Mamma's Consent ; I'll sooner perish than give her any just Cause to complain of me on that score, and I hope she will be so just as not to interpose her Authority in Behalf of the Man I hate.

Sir *Thomas* was speechless with Joy, had not Power to rise, and could only speak his Transport by imprinting a thousand Kisses on her Hand, which he held in his ; and she but faintly struggled to get it from him. They were both in this Situation, when Lady *Bountiful* open'd the Door suddenly, and heard, it seems, Miss *Summers's* last Words, viz. ' I hope she ' will be so just as not to interpose her ' Authority in Behalf of the Man I hate.' On seeing Sir *Thomas* on his Knees, eagerly kissing Miss *Summers's* Hand, the old Lady flew out in the greatest Passion, and the young People looked as if they had seen a Ghost.— Is this, Hussy ! said she, addressing herself to Miss *Summers*, the Return you make to me for rescuing you from Poverty and Wretchedness ? Is this the Cause of your Aversion to Mr. *Crofts* ?
Is

Is it your Regard for my mean-spirited Son? Must nothing serve your Turn, but to mix your beggarly Blood with mine? But I'll take Care you shall not. No! while I live, my House shall never be stain'd with a Parish Girl.—Poor Wretch! addressing herself to Sir *Thomas*, have you no more Regard to that Blood that fills your worthless Veins, but to give your Knee to the Creature of my Charity; to one raised from the Dunghill, and but for my foolish Pity for her Youth, had been by this Time some dirty Scullion, or perhaps a baser Prostitute. By Heavens! I can scarce think you my Offspring, or the Son of my worthy Husband. Thou must have been changed at Nurse, and I have been fostering, as my own, the mean-spirited Brat of some base-born Peasant; for none but such could harbour so mean a Thought, as to make honourable Love to a fair Beggar; but why did I mention honourable Love, thou couldst not, durst not think of it; thou hast certainly debauched her Person, as well as her Mind. — Miss *Summers* was silent all the Time of this unnatur'd Harangue, and Sir *Thomas* stood motionless; but when the Lady mentioned debauching her, Miss sunk down on the Floor in a Swoon. Sir *Thomas* then found the

the Use of all his Limbs; his Countenance, that before was pale, now reddened up into a deep Scarlet; he ran to his lovely Mistress, caught her in his Arms, and chafed her Temples to bring her to herself. — Have done, for Heaven's Sake, Madam, lest I should utter something in my Passion unbecoming the Respect I owe you as my Mother; for by the eternal God, had any Thing human besides yourself but muttered what you have now hinted against this wronged Innocence, this Moment had been his last: By Heavens, Madam, she is as chaste as new-born Innocence, and has more Respect and Gratitude for you than you deserve. But, Death! she is gone, while I am raving here. Quit the Room and call for Help, or by all that is sacred, I shall do some Deed of Desperation on myself! I cannot see her thus. — Lady *Bountiful*, frightened out of her Wits at the Madness of her Son, and perhaps softened by the Condition she saw the lovely Sufferer in, ran to the Door, and called the Servants, by whose Help she was with much Difficulty brought to herself, but so weak that she was immediately put to Bed. While she was undressing Sir *Thomas* was obliged, though much against his Will, to quit the Room, and Orders were given that he should be no more admitted.

The

The Lady *Bountiful* retired to her own Apartment, highly chagrined at Sir *Thomas's* Behaviour, who till this Minute, had always behaved to her with the utmost Respect and Submission. She called for Parson *Goodheart* and Dr. *Burton*, to whom she related all that had passed in Miss *Summers's* Apartment. They were both much surprized, as they had never suspected the least Motion of an Intrigue between Miss *Summers* and the Baronet. Dr. *Burton*, whose Esteem for Miss *Summers* made him look upon the Baronet's Crime in a less severe Light than the Lady, would have offered something in Justification of the young People, but he knew the Lady *Bountiful's* Foible, and that the bare Mention of any thing derogating in the smallest Degree from the Gentility of her Blood, would set all in Combustion, chose not to offer at a Defence, but proposed that Sir *Thomas*, whose fiery Temper would not bear with too open Contradiction, should be dealt with calmly, that if he could not be brought to think as they did, they might at least fish out of him how far Matters were gone, that proper Measures might be taken to prevent them. It was some Time before Lady *Bountiful* could be reasoned into this Conduct ; she repented her Son's Usage so much,

much, that she could scarce be prevailed on to see him, but was for turning Miss *Summers* forthwith out of Doors. But both the Doctors opposed this, as it would expose the Girl either to inevitable Ruin, or tempt Sir *Thomas* to some rash Action, and that it was better to keep her where she was, under a strict Watch, to prevent all Intercourse, and if possible to argue her out of her Consent to marry Mr. *Crofts*, which would determine all their Fears on the score of Sir *Thomas*. After much Arguments on both Sides, Sir *Thomas* was called upon, and Parson *Goodheart*, in his Mother's Presence, began to lecture him about his Behaviour in Miss *Summers's* Apartment. Sir *Thomas* used, till this Juncture, to hear the Parson preach for an Hour together without Interruption; but at this Time he had not quite so much Patience: He took him up short:—Prithee, Doctor, go, mind your Congregation, and don't presume to trouble me with your Impertinence: I am not now to be tutored like a Boy. As for what passed between me and the Lady *Bountiful*, I know when she is calm, free from Prejudice, and considers the Time, the Circumstances, and the Provocation I had, she will think I was not much out in my Respect to her. And as for Miss *Summers*, Mr. Parson, I charge you
on

on your Peril, to speak of her, and think of her too with the same Reverence you would on your Patron-Saint, or the first Time I know you fail in it, I shall make free with your canonical Shoulders were you at the Altar.—Hear the ungracious Boy, how he dares justify to my Face, says Lady *Bountiful*, his irreverend Carriage to me on the score of a dirty Beggar's Brat.—It is true, Madam, Fortune reduced her to the severest Circumstances, but you know she has as good Blood in her Veins as either you or I have, if your Pride would let you own it; but whether you do or not, when she is my Wife, I believe there is scarce a Man in the County dares object to her or me any Thing concerning her Circumstances: That she is well born I know; that she is well educated I know likewise, and thank you for it, as much as for my Being, which without her I tell you freely is not worth a Rush: You may make me miserable by denying your Consent; that indeed is in your Power; for, notwithstanding how much you rail at that lovely Innocent, yet such is her Gratitude to you, such her Sense of those Benefits she has received at your Hands, such her elevated Virtue, that the Prayers of suffering Martyrs, nor the Eloquence of Angels can not prevail on her to make me happy, or so much

much as give the smallest Hopes without your Consent. Her very last Words almost before you entered, and loaded her with such mean Reflections, were, ‘ But don’t
‘ think I can give Encouragement to your
‘ Addresses without your Mamma’s Con-
‘ sent ; I’ll sooner perish than give her any
‘ just Cause of Complaint against me on that
‘ Score ; and I hope, added she, that she
‘ will be so just, as not to interpose her
‘ Authority in behalf of the Man I hate.’ These were her last Words, which were far from deserving that Torrent of Reproach you loaded her with, or the mean Remembrance of the State you took her from. Alas, poor Girl ! she knows, and bears it in constant Remembrance. When I urged her by all that Love and Tendernefs could dictate, but to give me hope that I was not indifferent to her, and that my Services might gain upon her Affection, ‘ Think,
‘ says the lovely virtuous Maid, think what
‘ you ask ; think, Sir *Thomas*, what ought
‘ to be my Answer considering my Circum-
‘ stances. What would it avail you, were
‘ I to own that you are far from being in-
‘ different to me, and that your Happiness
‘ is as dear to me as my own ? What would
‘ it, added she, avail you to know this,
‘ when you know the unfurmountable Bars
that

' that lie betwixt us; Obstacles that never
 ' can be removed, not so much as in Hope,
 ' unless you can reverse the Order of Nature,
 ' and call back the Records of past Time,
 ' that has stamped me with the indelible
 ' Character of a Child of Charity, and the
 ' Object of your Family's Bounty; Cir-
 ' cumstances, Sir *Thomas*, that would brand
 ' me with the blackest Ingratitude, were I to
 ' indulge your fond Passion contrary to the
 ' Opinion of your Mamma, to whose tender
 ' Care of my helpless Youth I can never
 ' make so black a Return. Cease then, Sir
 ' *Thomas*, to think of me in any other Shape
 ' than as your Friend; assist me against your-
 ' self, to discharge in some Measure the ma-
 ' nifold Obligations I owe the kindest, ten-
 ' derest, and best of Women.' Are these,
 continued Sir *Thomas*, Sentiments that me-
 rited the opprobrious Epithets with which
 you loaded her Innocence? Are they not
 such as the strictest Virtue, and the most ex-
 tensive Gratitude could inspire? Can you
 wonder then, Madam, that I was carried
 into some Extremes in my Passion on hear-
 ing her Virtue arraigned in a Language al-
 together unbecoming my Mother. In short,
 Madam, you and my wise Friends may lay
 Schemes of Happiness for me as you please;
 you may oppose if you will my Designs upon
 Miss

Miss *Summers*, but I assure you before hand, that all will be in vain, for as I can know no Felicity but with her, so you may depend upon it I shall look upon every Person that uses that young Creature ill, as my greatest Enemy. — This said, he flung out of the Room, and left the Lady *Bountiful* and her Privy-Council to reflect upon what he had said.

The Lady *Bountiful* reflecting on what Sir *Thomas* had told her of Miss *Summers's* Behaviour, could not help being pleased with those Sentiments of Gratitude she had expressed; but still her Pride hinder'd her from being softened, as to the intended Match. She could not with any Patience think, that the Blood of the *Bountifuls* should be mingled with a Parish Girl, however exalted her Merit might be otherways. She was highly provoked at the ungracious Behaviour of the young Baronet, and alarmed at the Obstinacy of his Resolution, which she knew not how to break; for knowing the Hastiness of his Temper, she was afraid of coming to open Extremities, either with him or Miss; and afraid, lest an Abatement of her Resentment should give an Encouragement to what she was resolved on no Event to
consent

consent to. Dr. *Goodheart*, though he had all the Esteem in the World for Miss *Summers*, yet his Regard for Sir *Thomas*, whose Happiness he thought, with his Mother, should be measured by the additional Thousands he might expect with a Spouse, obliged him to advise, that Miss *Summers* should be instantly sent out of the Way, into some remote Place, where Sir *Thomas* might have no Opportunity of seeing or conversing with her, in Hopes that Absence might efface any Impressions he had conceived in her Favour. But this Motion Dr. *Burton* opposed with great Zeal, alledging, that as the young Lady, on her Part, had given no Encouragement to Sir *Thomas's* Addresses, it would be unjust to punish her, and expose her Innocence among Strangers, for no other Reason but because the Baronet was foolish : Besides, added he, the Moment Lady *Bountiful* ceases to place Confidence in Miss, from that Time she is under no Obligations to oppose Sir *Thomas's* Inclinations, out of Gratitude to her, by whom she must look upon herself as abandoned ; and you know the resolute Disposition of the Knight, as it will be hardly possible to keep him from the Knowledge of her Retreat, so he may, in a Fit of Madness, find Means to accomplish his De-

fires, in spite of all your Ladyship's Care to prevent it: Therefore my Advice would be, to encourage and strengthen those generous Sentiments, of which Miss is now possessed, by friendly and open Usage, and seeming to put an entire Confidence in her Virtue and Prudence, though at the same Time I would privately keep a very strict Eye over her, but in such Manner, as she might discover no Marks of the least Suspicion of her Conduct. I am persuaded, added he, that a Behaviour of this Kind must gain more upon a generous Mind, such as Miss *Summers* is eminently possessed of, than all the Rigours you can inflict, and must prove a greater Security against the fiery and rash Disposition of your Son, than if you were to send the unhappy Girl to the most remote Corner of the Island.

After very little Debate, this last Advice was resolved to be followed; and the Lady *Bountiful* went immediately up to Miss *Summers*'s Chamber, to make some Apology for what she had said in the last Conversation.

When the Lady entered the Room, Miss was scarce recovered from the Swoon into which

which she had fallen, and so very weak that she could scarce speak, and seemed to be in greater Agony on the Sight of Lady Bountiful, who she believed was come to upbraid her. The Lady ordered the Servants to quit the Room, and with a Countenance all Mildness sat down on the Bed-Side.— I am come, said she, my dear Child, to beg your Pardon for some harsh Things I said to you in my Son's Presence; he has since told me, how different your Conversation was to what I imagined it. I saw him, my dear *Charlotte*, in a Posture of making Love, and I hastily concluded, that you received and encouraged it. Consider, what a Mother must feel, when she sees at once all her Schemes of Happiness for an only Son frustrated, and you cannot blame the Passion I expressed.—Oh! far from it, Madam, cried Miss *Summers*, in a passionate Extasy; the Goodness in condescending to apologize to a Creature of your own raising, shews me how vile I should be, if I acted any Thing to the Prejudice of so good, so great a Benefactress, and confirms me in what I always thought my Duty, to sacrifice my Peace and Happiness to your Quiet. Oh, tell me, Madam, how I shall repay, in some Measure, the vast Debt I owe you;

and inform me what I can do to secure your Fears with regard to Sir *Thomas*.

You know, Miss *Summers*, replied the Lady *Bountiful*, I have always loved you as my own Child; and, next to that Boy, there is none on Earth I have so great an Esteem for. I only, in return, desire that you will deal with me candidly, and let me know your Sentiments, as to my Son's Passion, which he has openly declared.—Miss blushed at the Question, and remained some Moments in Silence, unwilling to disclose the Secrets of her Heart, and not daring to dissemble with her Patroness. At last her Regard to Truth got the better of all other Considerations.—I own to you, Madam, I am a bad Judge of my Sentiments on that Subject; I have too little Experience in the World, to make a sure Judgment of my own Mind, with regard to Sir *Thomas*. All I know is this, that I have the greatest Esteem for him; but whether that Esteem is founded on his being your Son, or to any latent Affection, I cannot be positive. I own to you I can feel no other Uneasiness at the Declaration he has made me of his Passion, but the Thoughts that such a Match would be disagreeable to you, and inconsistent with the Scheme of Happiness you
have

have proposed for him ; but you may be assured, Madam, that whatever Impression he may make on my Heart, that I shall never entertain or encourage it, since I am sensible it is not agreeable to you : All I am is owing to your Benevolence and Humanity, and I should detest myself if I were not ready at all Times to sacrifice every thing relating to myself to your Satisfaction.

I am pleased, returned Lady *Bountiful*, to find that you conceal nothing from me, and rejoice that your Sentiments are so agreeable to what I have always expected from your good Sense. Whatever Regard you have for my Son, you must endeavour to suppress it, for you are to consider he is young, and carried away by the Violence of a thoughtless Passion, to say and do a thousand Things, which in riper Years and more experienced Judgment, he would repent, and condemn himself for ; and then, what he now thinks his greatest Happiness, he would look upon as his greatest Curse. This is always the Effects of Matches founded on the Passions of thoughtless Youth, which you ought to shun on your own Account, as well as the Regard you have for me, who in all Things else will do every Thing to contribute to your Welfare

fare and your happy Settlement in the World. In the mean Time, I rely on your Prudence, that you will avoid giving any Encouragement to my Son, and do all in your Power to dissuade him from any Thoughts of you, and trust that you will communicate to me any Overtures he may make to you: And I wish you would think seriously of accepting the offers of Mr. *Crofts*, whose Passion is not the Result of youthful Folly, but the calm Deliberation of a Man of Sense, and Experience in the World, who is capable of a lasting solid Affection founded on your real Merit, which a stricter Union must rather increase, than diminish, and give you, according to every human Probability, the surest Prospect of all the Happiness which the conjugal State is capable of bestowing on People of Sense, Good-nature and Virtue.—Oh, Madam! name him not; the Thoughts of him my Soul abhors; the black Attempt he made on my Innocence, might be pardoned in a thoughtless Youth, or a professed Libertine, but in a Man of his deliberate sedate Sense, it speaks the disguised Hypocrite, and a Mind capable of the blackest Treachery, with whom it would be Madness in me to expect Peace or Happiness: Could I but bring my Mind to think of Mr. *Crofts*, but with calm

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Indifference, and without Horror, to calm your Fears, I would this Minute wed him ; but I find in myself such an Antipathy at the Mention of his Name, that I think it would be the Height of Iniquity, and neither more nor less than wilful Perjury, to swear to love, honour and obey a Man for whom I have the utmost Aversion. Cease, for God's Sake, to importune me on his Account ; I have made the utmost Efforts on my own Mind to conquer my Aversion with a View to your Quiet, but find it impossible ; but I swear to you solemnly, to try to root Sir *Thomas* from my Thoughts in every Shape but as the Son of my Benefactress ; and whether I succeed in that Attempt on myself or not, yet by my Hopes of Happiness, I promise never to give him the least Encouragement, or enter into any Engagement without your Knowledge. This, Madam, is all I can say to make you easy on that Score ; but if still any Doubts remain, pray let me retire to some remote Corner of the World, where I may pass my Days in praying for your Happiness, and where I may be out of the Reach of making you uneasy.

She spoke this with so moving and compassionate an Accent, that Lady *Bountiful*

was much affected.—No, my dear *Charlotte*, you shall never leave me ; I am perfectly secure in your Virtue, and trust to your Promises ; cheer up your Spirits, and be assured that the Sacrifice you make endears you to my Affections, and that it shall be the whole Study of my Life to make you happy, by making such Provision for you when I am gone, as may put you out of the Reach of Dependence, and entitle you to a Match worthy your Merit.—Miss would have made a Reply to this generous Promise, but the Lady quickly left the Room, and returned to the Doctors with the Success of this Conversation, and professed herself quite easy in her Mind, and determined, so long as she was quite secure of Miss, of whom she did not now entertain the least Doubt, to give herself no Trouble about Sir *Thomas's* Sentiments, but to permit him to act as he pleased ; believing, that as long as he found no Encouragement from the young Lady, that his Passion would soon cool of itself, and perhaps the sooner, that it met with no Opposition from those he most expected it ; for it is observable in most passionate People, that Contradiction makes them obstinate and tenacious of their Resolves, whereas when they are left to waste
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the first Fury without Opposition, they soon grow indifferent about what before ingrossed all their Faculties.

C H A P. III.

Containing a remarkable Dream of Miss Summers's; and another Conversation between her and Sir Thomas.

WHEN Lady Bountiful left Miss Summers's Room, that young Lady had Time to reflect on the Unhappiness of her Situation. She plainly understood, that Lady Bountiful dreaded the Effects of her Son's Affection for her, and that whatever Confidence she placed in her at present, yet that every trifling Accident would give Birth to her Fears, and expose her to daily Vexation; she judged that Sir Thomas would importune her, and doubted the Strength of her own Heart, to reject him in such a Manner as to give no Room for Hope, and she suspected that Mr. Crofts would take Advantage of her Situation, and urge his detested Proposals, and that propably it might breed a Quarrel between him and the hasty Sir Thomas. All these Things she revolved in her own Mind, and could figure to herself

no Prospect but that of the greatest Unhappiness, nor could think of any Scheme to extricate herself from these Difficulties. She passed the Remainder of the Day in great Perplexity, and almost fretted herself into a Fever. When Night came, and she hoped that Sleep would restore the Tranquility of her Mind, her anxious Thoughts kept her awake till near Morning, when she fell into a Slumber, where the ever wakeful Imagination presented to her Fancy, Dreams more irksome than her waking Thoughts.

She fancied at first she saw herself in the Midst of a delightful Valley, adorned with all the Beauties of a rural Landscape, and was pleasing herself with the beautiful Scenes of flowry Meads, Woods, Groves, and Silver Streams, that watered the verdant Prospect in a thousand winding Meanders; when, all of a sudden, the Scene shifted, and she found herself on the Brink of a hideous craggy Precipice, environed on all Sides with Briars, except one which overlooked a dreadful Lake, that shewed itself at the Distance of at least a thousand Fathoms perpendicular. She stood so near the Brink of the dreadful Precipice, that she was afraid every Moment, that the Wind, which blew a Hurricane, would tumble her head-long

long down. She fancied the Ground under her Feet to be ready to give way, and saw nothing to lay hold on but prickly Briars and Thorns, which tore her Hands as often as she attempted to lay hold on them ; but notwithstanding the horrible Anguish to which that put her, yet she chose rather to keep her Hold of them, than to venture falling down the horrid Precipice. She continued some Minutes in this miserable Situation, when, to heighten the Calamity, she imagined she saw Mr. *Crofts* and Sir *Thomas* running to her, with each a drawn Dagger, which, by their Looks and Motions, they seemed to threaten to plunge into her Bosom. She expected every Moment the fatal Blow, or to be tumbled, in avoiding it, into the Abyfs below, when she heard a Voice cry out, Fly, fly, Miss *Summers*, or you are undone. The Dread of the Word Undone, and the Impossibility of flying from the Spot she was in, threw her into such a Panic, that she waked with a great Shriek, and awakened Mrs. *Margery*, who ever since the Attempt by Mr. *Crofts*, lay in the Closet on the Inside Miss *Summers's* Room. The old Woman imagining some Mischief was afloat, started out of the Closet in her Shift, and ran to Miss *Summers's* Bed-Side, who, though awake, had not yet recovered

from the Agony of her Dream, and allowed Mrs. *Margery* to call her two or three Times before she could answer her.— Oh ! Mrs. *Margery*, I have been in the most frightful Dream I ever had in my Life ; my Hair yet stands an End with the Horror of it : I thought, among other horrible Things, I saw, that Mr. *Crofts* and Sir *Thomas* were going to plunge their Daggers into my Bosom.— Phoh, phoh, says *Margery*, is that all ; I thought one of them, at least, had been here, ready to plunge a Dagger into your Breast ; but I warrant neither of them will hurt you. It is a Sign, Child, that they both love you ; but you need not have dreamed that, they have told you as much broad awake. Come, compose yourself, and go to Sleep, and dream of something more pleasant than Daggers.

The old Woman went to Bed, a little fretted that she had been waked only with a silly Dream, and left Miss *Summers* as little satisfied with the Explanation of the horrid Vision, which made such Impression on her Spirits, that she could not shut her Eyes but some Images occur'd to her Imagination, the frequent Repetition of it, and its always ending with the Words, *Fly, or you are undone !* made her believe (who had no contemptible

temptible Notion of Dreams) that this was something more than mere Illusion or Force of Imagination.

She got up next Morning very little refreshed with her Night's Rest, and under the utmost Uneasiness about her Dream, which she could not banish from her Thoughts. She turned it over in her Mind in all possible Shapes, and endeavour'd to explain it according to the Skill she had in that Kind of Divination, but her disordered and perplexed State of Mind could suggest nothing to her, but that it portended some imminent Danger that threaten'd her, which she had no other Way to avoid but by Flight.

She came down to Breakfast, but without that Chearfulness in her Looks she used to wear; a heavy Melancholy sat brooding in her Countenance, her Cheeks wore a livid Paleness instead of that natural Bloom which used to adorn them, and her Eyes had lost their natural Vivacity, and stood motionless in their Sockets; in short, in spite of all her Art to conceal her inward Uneasiness, the Alteration was visible to all the Company. Sir *Thomas* saw it, imagined it owing to something that had passed between his Mother

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ther and her on his Account ; he took fire on the bare Imagination, looked first at Miss *Summers*, and then at his Mother, with all the Marks of Discontent in his Countenance. Mr. *Crofts* attributed her Chagrine to his Presence, and out of Complaisance left the Room before Breakfast was half finished, and Lady *Bountiful* herself was in Pain till she was alone with her, to find out the Cause of a Grief which sat so visible in his Countenance. When the Gentlemen withdrew, Lady *Bountiful* with great Tenderness asked her what was the Matter with her, if any thing new had happened since last Night to give her Uneasiness : She would have concealed the real Cause, but being pressed by the Lady *Bountiful*, she at last related her Dream in all its Circumstances, and how heavy it sat upon her Mind, and in the Conclusion begged that she might be permitted to make a Visit to a Relation of Lady *Bountiful*'s, who lived about twenty Miles off, who had expressed a great Friendship for her, and had often importuned her to pass two or three Months at her House. She said, she hoped in that Time she might be restored to her former Tranquility of Mind, and that at least her Absence would force her from the Dread she had of Mr. *Crofts*, and oblige him to return to *London*, who staid at *Bounty-Park*

Park only to prosecute his Suit with her. *Lady Bountiful* endeavoured to argue her out of her Conceit of the Dream, telling her it was nothing but the Effect of her Perplexity of Mind, occasioned by the present State of her Circumstances: But when she could not entirely remove her Prepossessions, she began to yield to her Proposal of paying a Visit for a few Weeks to her Relation; but all of a sudden she recollected that that *Lady* had often mentioned how happy *Sir Thomas* would be in such a Wife as *Miss Summers*, and how generous it would be in a Man of his Fortune to marry a Woman whose Merit by much counter-balanced the greatest Fortune he could have with one less deserving. This Thought occurring to *Lady Bountiful*, determined her against permitting *Miss Summers* to go where *Sir Thomas* would be encouraged in his Designs, and at the same time she began to entertain some Suspicion that this Visit was concerted between *Sir Thomas* and *Miss*, with a View the better to deceive her. Watchfulness, therefore she told her on second Thoughts, it would be better to stay at Home, and to make Use of her Reason to combat the Impressions of a disordered Fancy, and that there was no Place she could be so secure from Danger as in her House, where

where she was sure every one of the Family were so much in her Interest as do all in their Power to protect her, and to divert her Melancholy. Miss urged her Visit with some Warmth, till Lady *Bountiful* let fall some Hints as if she thought it a Plot; then she dropped it, but could not help leaving the Room with this Exclamation: Good God! to what am I destin'd, when the Means I propose to fortify my Virtue, and clear my Innocence, is interpreted as a Design to destroy both?

She went from thence to her Chamber, where she found Sir *Thomas* at high Words with Mrs. *Margery*, who had been offering her Advice, to desist his Pretensions to Miss, and not to disoblige his Mamma, by marrying one so much beneath him. Sir *Thomas* resented her officious Care, and gave the old Housekeeper some Epithets which inflamed her Choler. When Miss appeared, they dropped the Discourse, and Miss, on Sight of Sir *Thomas*, changed Colour, and would have left the Room; but the Baronet catch'd hold of her Hand—No, my dear Miss, you shall not leave me, I must be acquainted with the Cause of that deep Sorrow that covers your lovely Countenance—and pointing to Mrs. *Margery* to retire, she
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went into the Closet, and he proceeded—
Tell me, my Angel, added he, from whence proceeds this Melancholy? Am I the unhappy Cause, has my wife Mamma said any Thing further to ruffle your Temper; tell me, I conjure you, what I can do to restore you to your wonted Temper—That I'm afraid, replied the lovely Maid, is impossible, but nothing can contribute more towards it, than your behaving towards me in the same Manner we have lived together from our Infancy, and that you give your Mother no Offence on my Account: This may restore the Peace of the Family, and in Time may dissipate the Uneasiness I feel at giving Pain to those whom I owe more than my Existence, and from this Time forward I beg of you, Sir *Thomas*, by all the Ties of Humanity, if you value my Peace and Happiness, that you will desire no private Conversation with me, nor entertain any other Thoughts of me, but as a Person dependent on the Benevolence of your Family.—By Heavens, Miss, you ask Impossibilities; their prying Zeal has stole the dear Secret from my Bosom; I now proclaim it publicly, that I would not forfeit my Hopes of Felicity with you for all the Treasures of the wealthy East. Yes, Madam, I must pursue you with my Passion till I have melted

melted down that frozen Virtue of yours into a Flame as violent as my own. I owe Duty and Respect to my Mother, but I owe something to my own Happiness and eternal Peace, which has no other Object but you. Do you think, that in Compliance with the capricious Fondness of a Parent, I can wed myself to one I hate, for the Sake of a paltry Addition to my Fortune, already sufficient to gratify my most luxurious Wishes? No, my dear *Charlotte*, I find more solid Bliss in this Hand when given from the Heart, than all the Treasures of *Peru* and *Mexico* can yield me: Give me Leave then to repeat my Vows, to sooth you with my fond Passion and Hopes, that some time or other you will bless me with a Return of Love and Joy.—Never think of it, Sir *Thomas*, replied Miss *Summers* struggling from his Hand, Heaven and my Duty has laid invincible Bars between us, were you dearer to my Eyes, than the Smiles of a First-born to a tender Parent; were my Peace and Happiness here bound up in your Affection, yet by all that's sacred—Hold, for Heaven's Sake, Madam, interrupting her, don't swear the rash Oath, unless you mean to stab me at your Feet, or strike me motionless with the unhallowed Sound: I can guess what you would add; yes,

yes, I know what your peevish Virtue would say, that you would chuse to be wretched rather than make me happy. But it is I must be wretched ; may Peace and Happiness attend your Steps, and may you be for ever a Stranger to the racking Torments of a hopeless Passion such as I now feel : But tell me, thou cruel virtuous Maid, sure you may yield this small Comfort to a despairing Wretch, to inform me, if those Bars, those Obstacles of Duty were removed, what Reception would my Affection meet ; do but tell me that you but wish that they were removed, and I shall be blessed beyond Conception, and enabled to wait with Patience till Providence is pleased to crown our mutual Loves.—The Question, Sir *Thomas*, is needless, as it is morally impossible that they ever should, search no further, but give me this Proof of the Sincerity of your Friendship, to entertain me no more with your Passion. Reason and Sense tells me that I should not hear it, and I have promised sacredly to your Mother never to give you the least Encouragement ; therefore, unless that Passion you speak of can prompt you to make me for ever wretched, you will banish it your Thoughts, and permit me to enjoy all the Tranquility my wretched Circumstances are capable of.—Sir *Thomas* stood amazed,

amazed, unable to speak one Word for some Minutes.— Is it so then? recovering as from a Reverie, Nature has conspired against me, and she that ought to study my Peace and Happiness, is determined on my Ruin. No more, Madam, shall I trouble you, since I know to whom I owe my Misery: But from this Moment adieu all natural Ties, farewell all Thoughts of Mother, Friends and Relations: What are they all to me, while they make me wretched? I will banish myself your Sight, and take Refuge in some more hospitable Part of the World; for, Oh, Miss! while I am near you, I cannot live without pouring out my Soul before you, and since you deny me that poor Comfort in Complaisance to a capricious Parent, I shall not disturb your Quiet; but mark the End of it, you may perhaps repent when too late, that you made, or at least that you observed your Promise so rigorously.— This he uttered in so dejected a Tone and Air, that if he had not left the Room, Miss *Summers* might have relented, and said something to have calmed the Agony in which he appeared.

She threw herself upon the Bed, and shed a Torrent of Tears, cursed her Fate a thousand Times, that she should be the innocent Cause

Cause of so much Uneasiness as she foresaw this unhappy Affair would breed in the Family. — Good God ! what shall I do ? To what Hand turn me ? Were I alone the unhappy Sufferer, I could bear it with Patience ; but when I think what may be the Consequence of the dear Youth's rash Resolves, and how I shall be cursed by all his Relations, if any thing but Good happens to him. My Mind is distracted. Oh ! teach me, some pitying Angel, how to steer my Course in this dismal Labyrinth. If I sooth his Hopes, I act against my Duty, and betray the Confidence reposed in my Promises. If I continue to observe the Conduct which Reason, and my dear Benefactress, dictate to me, something fatal may ensue from the Rashness of his Temper. Which ever Way I turn me, I see Danger round me ; but I must let Truth and Virtue guide my Actions, and leave all Events to Divine Providence.

Mrs. *Margery*, who had her Ear all this while fixed close to the Key-Hole of the Closet, and listened to every Word that passed, observing by this Soliloquy that Sir *Thomas* was gone, ventured out from her Retreat, and endeavoured to comfort the fair Mourner ; but the Case was too intricate

cate for her to be capable of giving her any Advice ; and besides, she was in a Hurry to leave her, in order to acquaint Lady *Bountiful* with all that had passed. That Lady, when she heard the Conversation repeated, was charmed with the Steadiness of Miss's Behaviour, but much alarmed with the Menaces which dropped from Sir *Thomas*, and prodigiously perplexed how to behave in such a Manner as not to drive him to Extreams. A Cabinet Council was summoned, at which both the Spiritual and Temporal Doctors assisted ; but nothing could be fixed on, that promised any Success, to settle the important Point, and broke up in a Sort of Confusion, on Dr. *Burton's* dropping a Hint, that he did not think the Affair merited so much Consideration ; that, for his Part, the Question seemed to be only, Whether Sir *Thomas* should marry a Woman of intrinsic Worth and Excellence, without a Portion, on whom he had fixed his Hopes of Happiness, or marry one with a large Fortune, with whom he must be for ever miserable. — Lady *Bountiful* did not like the State of the Question, and adjourned the Debate, alledging, that she saw they were all combined in encouraging her ungracious Son to disobey her, in a Point of the last Importance, and to disgrace himself
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and Family with a handsome, proud-spirited Beggar.---As she utter'd these Words, Sir *Thomas* entered the Room, and took her up short.— Yes, Madam, I am determin'd, not to disgrace, but to honour my Family, with that proud-spirited Beggar, or perish in the Attempt; and I advise you to dispose her willingly to listen to my Passion; that is, Madam, that you will be pleased to make it your Request that she accept of the Offers I make her. I give you twenty-four Hours to bring it about; if I find any Demur from your Opposition to my Inclinations after that Time, remember you have only yourself to blame for what follows: I'll allow you, Madam, to dispose of my Estate, manage that as you will, you may chuse Tutors, Horses or Hounds for me, but I'll chuse a Wife for myself, since mine is the Happiness or Misery of that State, and which all your Foresight, aided with Millions, cannot ensure without a previous Union of Affections.— Lady *Bountiful* would not have permitted him to have gone on so long, but that she was silent with Rage: He saw the Storm approaching, and left the Room without waiting her Reply, and immediately took Horse, leaving Word with the Porter he would not be at Home that Night.

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Though Lady *Bountiful* had as much Command of her Temper as most Women, yet on this Occasion her Rage exceeded moderate Bounds: The Insolence of her Son appeared intolerable, yet the greatest Part of her Anger was vented against the innocent Cause of all this Rout, and she was withheld, not without some Violence, from going up to her Chamber, and turning her that Minute out of Doors: But the Doctors found Means to bring her to a little more Reason, and to convince her, that it was the only Method she could take to force her Son to marry her out of a mere Point of Honour; and that she had no Hopes of disappointing his Designs, but by observing Measures with Miss, at least, till they could learn what these Menaces of Sir *Thomas* imported, of which at present they had no Idea, unless he meant to carry her off by Force, which would be an effectual Method to make Miss his Enemy for ever, if she acted consistent with her Behaviour to *Crofts* on a like Occasion.

- I think it was Dr. *Burton* who made this Remark, which he mention'd at a Time when Mrs. *Margery* was present, and she, out of her great Zeal, went that Minute up to Miss *Summers*, and acquainted her, that Sir *Thomas* had certainly an Intention to carry her off by Force. If

If that unhappy Lady was in Perplexity before, her Agonies were now doubled : She considered, that if he succeeded, that she would be thought privy to the Design, and that the whole was an Artifice to save Appearances with the World. She dreaded her Reputation if she should comply when in his Power ; believed that Compliance would be explained to her Disadvantage, and she now began to think seriously, that she could propose to herself but small Hopes of Happiness with a Man whose Temper was always in Extremes, for ever in a Tempest, and so easily inflamed to the most desperate Attempts. She saw it was in vain to ask Leave to retire from the Family for some Time, as that would now be looked upon as favouring Sir *Thomas's* Designs, as it was the Day before. She had no Friend to advise with, they were all Creatures either of Sir *Thomas* or the Lady's, and tho' all in the Family would have risked their Lives for her on any other Account, yet where these were concerned, she had no Hopes that their Advice would be disinterested. She spent most Part of the Day in these uneasy Reflections, and desired being excused going down to Dinner.

That same Afternoon Mr. *Crofts* received an Express from *London*, acquainting him, that a Relation of his, who had been his Guardian during his Minority, and in the Receipt of the Rents of his Estate while he was on his Travels, and with whom he had not yet made a final Settlement of the Accounts betwixt them, was at the Point of Death. It is more than probable that Mr. *Crofts*, who saw plainly that Miss *Summers's* Aversion to him was so strongly rooted, that he had but little Hopes of prevailing in his Suit, especially in Opposition to Sir *Thomas*; I say, it is more than probable that he was glad of this Excuse to quit the House: He communicated the Contents of his Letters to Lady *Bountiful*, and told her the Necessity he was under of setting out immediately, and expressed his Concern, that he had not the Pleasure of taking Leave of Sir *Thomas* before he went, and begged that he might be permitted to pay his Compliments to Miss *Summers*. Lady *Bountiful* acquiesced in the Necessity of his going, and sent up one of the Footmen to acquaint Miss *Summers*, that Mr. *Crofts* desired to wait on her in her Chamber. That young Creature, who had been but too much perplexed with Sir *Thomas's* Visit, and her Mind too full of Sorrow to need any Addition,
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excused herself from seeing him on Pretence of her Indisposition, believing, as the Footman had told her nothing of his Intention of going away, that the Subject of his Visit would be the old Theme, which she was in no Disposition to listen to. He was obliged to submit, begged Lady *Bountiful* to offer her his Compliments, and if possible, to endeavour to remove the Prejudice she had conceived against him, and took Horse about Six o'Clock in the Evening, in order to reach that Night the Stage, where he might take Post-Horses for *London*.

As Evening approached, Miss *Summers* grew still more alarmed, as judging, that perhaps that very Night some Attempt might be made upon her.

Sometimes, when Nature, weary with the melancholy Scene, would sooth the tormenting Thoughts with some Gleam of Pleasure, she should figure to herself Sir *Thomas* at her Feet, breathing out the softest and kindest Wishes, and excusing the Violence he was obliged to use to obtain her, by the Obstinacy of his Mother, who capriciously denied her Consent to their mutual Happiness. She could for a Moment permit her Heart to dilate itself with the pleasing Dream of

possessing the only Man she could Love, one she had accustomed herself to think of with innocent Pleasure, and would flatter herself that the Violence used, would hold her excused to *Lady Bountiful* ; and that she, who had used so many Arguments in Favour of *Crofts*, founded on the Cause of Reputation, would admit their Force when applied to the Case of her Son : But her watchful Virtue soon roused her from these flattering Dreams, and she chid her own Heart for tolerating Thoughts so remote, from what both her Duty and Virtue required, and returned again to torment herself with the Apprehension of what she should suffer should *Sir Thomas* make an Attempt of that Kind. As the Night drew on her Fears encreased, and nothing appeared more terrible to her than the Time she expected the Family to go to Rest, when it was most probable the Attempt would be made, if at all.

At this Time, the Dream mentioned in the foregoing Part of this Chapter, occurred to her eMemory with all its frightful Circumstances, and comparing it with what she Thought she had Reason to fear, she concluded that she would be wanting to herself, if she did not take the Advice it so often repeated, *To fly from Ruin.*

Her

Her Apprehensions were so strong, that she soon determined on a sudden Flight; but where she was to seek a Retreat was what was not so easily determin'd. She knew no Person in that Country at whose House she could be concealed, or who perhaps would enter so far into her unhappy Circumstances, as to endeavour to hide her from the Search that might be made after her. But by this Time the Family were all gone to Rest, and a profound, and to her a Melancholy, Silence reigned every where: Even Mrs. *Margery* in the Closet, who used to entertain her with the Stories and Adventures of her Youth, fell fast asleep the Moment she laid her Head to the Pillow, and by her Snoring seemed to be in a deeper Sleep than ordinary. The Rustling of the Trees that surrounded the House, and now and then the barking of *Towser*, the Watch Dog in the Yard, at Travellers passing to and fro, threw her into the most dreadful Panic, as believing every such Accident the Forerunner of her Ruin. In short, her Fears grew upon her so quick, that she put an End to all Deliberation about where she was to go, but determined at once to quit the House, and trusted that Providence would direct her Steps to some Asylum, where she might

D 3

find

find Relief from these anxious Thoughts which now haunted her Mind, and represented her Peace, her Virtue and Reputation in the most imminent Danger.

Thus resolved, she began to prepare for her Journey ; most of her Cloaths lay in a Cloaths-Chest in the Closet, where she could not enter for fear of waking Mrs. *Margery*, whom she now wish'd might sleep as sound as possible, and if she could have come at them, it is more than probable she would not have taken many of them, as a large Bundle would incommode her Flight. She contented herself then with the Night-Gown she had on, which happened to be a brown Silk, and another blue and white Linnen, which she tied up in a Napkin with some Linnen. She had her Watch, some few Trinkets and Jewels of no great Value, and about twenty Guineas in Cash, which she sewed up in one of her Petticoats, and having wrote a Letter which she left in her Dressing-Box, she put on her Cloak and Cap, and began to take her last Leave of that Apartment where she had passed the happy Hours of her infant State.—Farewell thou once peaceful Abode, may Peace, Joy, and eternal Happiness, attend the generous Owner ; may none belonging to this worthy
Fa-

Family know the Miseries I now feel, but may their Hearts be filled with Peace, and may the Prayers of the Widow, the Poor, and the fatherless Orphan, bring down on their Heads Part of those Blessings here, which must be the future Reward of so much Virtue and Benevolence hereafter. Oh, thou eternal Being, who has guided the Steps of my Youth hitherto, and has instilled into my Mind the Principles of Virtue, and a Dependence on thee, still guide my Steps in the Ways of Peace, protect my Innocence from Wrongs, and endue me with Constancy to bear all that thy Providence designs to inflict upon me.—A Flood of Tears followed. She looked wishfully round the Room, like one bidding a final Adieu to his best Friends, and took up the Candle, opened the Chamber-Door very softly, and went down into the Back-Parlour, which had a Door into the Pleasure-Garden. As she came to the Door, she put out the Candle, set it down in the Chimney, and went out. The Moon shone bright, as propitious to an Action undertaken in Defence of Virtue and Innocence, and directed her to a Back-door which opened into the Park, of which she had the Key; she opened it, went out, and shut it behind her, and put the Key under the Door. Now she thought herself safe,

D 4

safe, and sat her down under an old Oak, about a hundred Yards from the Door, where she used often to sit and read in Times of peaceful Prosperity, and began to reflect with great Calmness where she should direct her Steps. But as it is almost Morning, the Reader must excuse me if I return to Bed and take a Nap, after the Fatigue of this Chapter, before I proceed any further ; if he is not so disposed, he may entertain himself with *Miss Summers* under the old Oak, till I am at Leisure to conduct her further on her Journey ; for there I have cast a Spell upon her, that she cannot move one Step without my Leave.

C H A P. IV.

Containing the Alarm at Lady Bountiful's House on Miss Summers's being missed.

IN the Morning, Mrs. *Margery* got up at her usual Hour, and took no Notice of not finding *Miss Summers* in her Chamber, as she was generally an early Riser, and used often to go out a walking for an Hour or two before Breakfast, if the Weather permitted. When the Bell rung for Prayers, and Breakfast was afterwards served up in
Lady

Lady *Bountiful's* Bed-Chamber, and Miss appeared at neither, the Family were under some Surprize, but as yet they never suspected an Elopement, but fancied she might be visiting some of Lady *Bountiful's* sick Patients, which Amusement she was very fond of.

About one o'Clock Sir *Thomas* returned, and as soon as he alighted, ran up to Miss *Summers's* Chamber, where he was told she had not been seen all the Morning, and that none of the Family knew what was become of her. As Lovers Fears are soon kindled, he was not so patient as the rest, but concluded some Misfortune had happened in his Absence, and at least that his Mother had on purpose sent her out of the Way. He went in a Rage to Lady *Bountiful's* Apartment, and in very indecent Terms, urged her to tell him what was become of her. The Lady *Bountiful* was incensed at her Son's undutiful Behaviour, but more alarmed at the Thoughts of Miss *Summers* having left the House. She protested to him, that she knew nothing of her going away, and could not be persuaded that she had taken such a Step, especially since she had now nothing to fear from Mr. *Crofts*,— who went, added she, last Night for *London*, with a

Resolution, I believe, to forget her.—*Crofts* gone? returned Sir *Thomas* in a Rage—then I am undone indeed! It is all Plot to ruin me; you have seduced her to his Purpose, and he has certainly carried her off: But, by Heavens! if they are above Ground, I'll find them out, and sacrifice that treacherous Ravisher to my just Revenge; he shall not long triumph in those Charms in which I placed my sole Hopes of Happiness. No, were I to meet him at the Altar, there I would plunge my Sword into his false Heart, and drench their stolen *Hymen* in Blood and Revenge. Is this the coy Virgin, that could not hear his Name without Horror but Yesterday-morning; yet in the Evening, in the Dead of Night, can steal to his hated Arms, and trust her boasted Virtue to a midnight Ravisher: How have I been their Dupe, their easy Tool: By Heavens! the whole Sex is but one entire Composition of Cozenage and Diffimulation. But it is you, Madam, I have to blame for this Misfortune, which poisons all my future Enjoyments: Without your Aid he could never have prevailed; but her mistaken Notions of Duty and Gratitude to you, has betrayed her and me to Wretchedness and Misery. But I trifle away the precious Moments: I go, Madam; and never expect
to

to hear more of me, till I have overtaken the Runaways.

Lady *Bountiful* stepped between him and the Door, and after trying in vain the Authority of a Parent to stay his Rashness, she condescended so far to the Impetuosity of his Temper, as to endeavour to sooth him; begg'd him to be calm, and that she would join with him in Search of Miss *Summers*, who, if she was gone at all, was not certainly gone with Mr. *Crofts*, but perhaps to avoid him, and for Fear any Constraint should be laid upon her to accept of his Proposals;—for, added she, Miss *Summers* knew nothing last Night of his Intention to go; she was not out of her Chamber from the Time you left us at Breakfast, and refused to admit of a Visit from him when he intended to have taken his Leave. But it is possible all our Fears are in vain; she is perhaps only gone to visit Farmer *Mossman's* Daughter who is very bad, and you know was her great Favourite: I'll send *Thomas*, the Postilion, there immediately to satisfy ourselves, before we expose the Girl, by alarming the Family and Neighbours with a Notion of her running away.

Sir *Thomas* began to be a little pacified, and to form some Hopes that his Affairs were not in so bad a Way as he at first imagin'd ; but he was not long left to doubt the worst that had happened to him, for in about ten Minutes Mrs. *Margery* came, in a great Flutter, into the Room—Alack-a-day Madam, what shall I tell you? What do you think has happened to poor Miss *Summers*?—To Miss *Summers*! Mrs. *Margery*? What has happened to her? cried Sir *Thomas*, with all the Tokens of Despair in his Countenance ; for Heaven's Sake, tell me quickly what it is, before my foreboding Heart has Time to form Notions to itself that may make me mad.—Lord have Mercy upon us, Sir *Thomas*, says *Margery*, don't be in such a frightful Hurry ; I'll tell you as fast as I can ; but, lest I should be too slow, for now indeed I cannot speak so fast as I was wont to do when I was young, see here this Letter, I found it when I was looking for a Comb in her Dressing-Box ; it is directed to her Ladyship, and written with the dear Creature's own Hand.—Sir *Thomas* snatched it hastily out of her Hand, while she was handing it to Lady *Bountiful*, and opened it, it having no Seal, and read the Contents.

Miss

Miss Summers's Letter to Lady Bountiful.

Much honoured Madam,

HOW much I owe to your generous Bounty, to the tender Care you have taken of me, since the happy Hour that Providence cast me in your Way, is too much for Words to express; but the tender grateful Sentiments, which such benevolent Usage inspires, fill my Heart, and occupy all my Faculties. The all-seeing Eye, that governs all Events, knows with what awful Reverence I esteem your Ladyship, and how incessantly I pray to him to teach me, how I can merit the Continuance of your Protection, and make Returns suitable to the many Blessings he has bestowed on me by your Means. To please you has been my constant Study, and how to avoid offending has employed all my Thoughts, ever since I had the Use of Reason. But in this Step of my Conduct, perhaps, I have erred; yet God is my Judge, that it is not wilfully, and that I have been prompted to leave your Family for no other Reason, but to preserve my Innocence from Danger, and your Ladyship's Peace unviolated. The unhappy Passion which Sir Thomas has owned for me, is no Secret to you; nor have I concealed my Sentiments of it. It is that alone,
Ma-

Madam, that has determined me to throw myself once more upon that Providence, that has so remarkably preserved my Infant Years, rather than trust myself where I was in Danger, from the rash Attempts of a young Man, from the Weakness of my own Resolutions, and exposed to the continual Dread of your Ladyship's Displeasure, arising from the natural Fears of a Parent for the Happiness of an only Son. Your Care, Madam, your great Example, has instilled into my early Years the Notions of Virtue, the Delicacy of a Woman's Reputation. I hope then you cannot blame me for taking a Step which secures the just Fears I had of both. For this Evening I was told Sir Thomas intended to have made use of Force to gain his Ends. It was then no Time to deliberate, since every Moment endangered my Reputation, and might, in spite of me, make me accessory to disturb the Peace of my Benefactress, for whose Happiness I would willingly sacrifice my Life.

I know I run myself into Danger, and expose myself to a thousand Perils, which the bare Thought of shocks my Soul; yet when I know that then I can only suffer alone, and that I have freed your Ladyship from the Jealousy you had of me, I embrace cheerfully,
and

and shall bear patiently with all that Providence, in whom alone I put my Trust, shall please to inflict on me. It is needless to say I conceal where I go, since at present I have not so much as an Idea to what Corner of the World I shall steer my Course; but where-ever Heaven shall direct my Steps, or furnish me with an Abode, my Hopes, my Wishes, my Prayers, shall be addressed for Peace and Happiness to attend your Family. I can no more; my Fears increase, and I must bid a long and last Adieu to this hospitable Seat, and can only add, that I am, with great Respect,

Madam,

Your Ladyship's

Most obedient, and

most humble Servant,

CHARLOTTE SUMMERS.

On reading this Letter, Lady Bountiful melted into Tears; and to conceal the Confusion, as well as to avoid the Upbraidings of her Son, she took Advantage of the deep Study into which the Letter had thrown him, and retired to her Closet.

Sir

Sir *Thomas* remained like one Thunder-struck for some Moments, and then fell into a Fit of Raving, little different from Madness, threatening Impossibilities against all Mankind, and sometimes hinting to lay violent Hands on himself, which so frightened Mrs. *Margery*, who was still in the Room, that she went to the Door, and called Dr. *Burton* to come up for God's Sake. When he came, and asked the Cause of this Outcry, Sir *Thomas* told him all that had happened, and shewed Miss *Summers's* Letter.—Have not I Reason to be mad? All my Joys are fled, and the lovely, too, too, virtuous Maid exposed to all the Dangers of an uncharitable World for my Sake alone: Curse on my unhappy Stars! that I could not smother my Passion, and have remained miserable alone, and not have blasted her Peace, and destroyed her Quiet with it. But what malicious Villain, what hellish Fiend could tell her that I intended to use Force or Violence to the charming Maid? It is that Thought that has robbed me of all Happiness: She is not only gone away a forlorn Fugitive she knows not where, but has gone with the damn'd Impression that I am a Villain, a base Ravisher, and an Enemy to her spotless Innocence: It is that Thought,

Thought, dear Doctor, that distracts me, that the lovely Maid must abhor me, and never think of me but as the Cause of her Undoing, and a Villain unworthy of her smallest Esteem: Oh that some pitying Angel would teach me where to find her, that I might lay open my whole Soul before her; that I might convince her how much my Soul abhors the Thoughts of brutal Violence, and with what a holy Flame I adore her spotless Worth.

Dr. *Burton* was so amazed and concerned at the unexpected News, that he took very little Notice of what Sir *Thomas* said, or the Concern he was in: He could scarce refrain from Tears, so much the Fate of that unhappy young Creature affected him. He was going out of the Room without speaking a Word, when Sir *Thomas* pulled him by the Sleeve:—What is the Meaning of this Silence? Are you privy to her Escape? Tell me this Instant (laying his Hand upon his Sword) where she is, or, by all that's Secret! this Moment is the last you breathe: I know she always trusted you more than any Body else; she could not venture on an Action of this Kind without some Advice, and I see by your Confusion you know the Place of her Retreat.

This

This Action of the Baronet's raised the Doctor from the profound Melancholy into which the News had thrown him. — Forbear, rash young Man, it is the impetuous Fury of your Temper that has hurried the unhappy Girl to this Act of Despair. Your Passion has undone her, and she may be this Moment a Prey to some Night-Robber, and her Innocence exposed to some lustful Ravisher. Would to God I knew where she is! Not that I would give you any Information; no, all your Threats should not draw the Secret from me; but that I might protect her Innocence, and preserve her Virtue from the Temptation of Want, Contempt and Poverty. But she cannot be far off; I will go myself, and send every Way in Search of her, before she can have Time to leave the County. — Forgive me, dear Doctor, replied Sir *Thomas*; pardon the Madness of my Thoughts; all is in Tumult within me; I can scarce speak, act, or think rationally; but I will join you in the Search of the lovely Wanderer, for without her there is not a Wretch on Earth so miserable as I am.

Sir *Thomas*, the Doctor, Parson *Goodheart* (who sympathized, as well as the rest, in the

the Misfortunes of the dear Runaway) and all the Servants, went different Ways to learn Tidings of the fair Fugitive. But I have not Leisure to give you an Account of their fruitless Search; or the Grief that overwhelmed the whole Family, when they found her irrecoverably lost; I am in Haste to close the Chapter, that I may return to my pretty Traveller, and conduct her through the most rugged Part of her Journey.

C H A P. V.

Containing the first Night of Miss Summers's Travels.

I LEFT my lovely Parish Girl sitting under an old Oak, deliberating with herself which Way she should direct her Journey. Had she left the hospitable Roof, that sheltered her Infant Years, to gratify some unruly Passion, in Chace of some favourite Swain, perhaps the Horrors of the Night, the dismal Rustling of the Wind through the old Trees, the hideous Croaking of the Shriek-Owl, and a thousand frightful Images the Fancy is apt enough, in such Circumstances, to suggest to weak Minds,

Minds, might have disturbed her Cogitations, and rendered her very unfit to deliberate in such a Place with that Calmness which the Importance of the Subject required: But it was otherwise with the lovely Wanderer; no Vice stained her conscious Innocence, no unruly Passion blinded her Understanding, no soft-tongued, deluding Swain interposed between her and her Duty; she fled from Vice and Danger, and left Ease and decent Grandeur, to preserve her Virtue, and the Peace of a Family she owed more than Life to; a Family to whom she owed those virtuous Sentiments, which supported her in calm Tranquility, in Circumstances which would have curdled the Blood of the boldest of her Sex.

Women generally pride themselves in being timorous, and think it becomes their Sex to be frightened at a Shadow, to scream, and squall at Dangers begot only in their own Imagination; yet they can get the better of these polite fashionable Fears, when some favourite Passion is to be gratified, or when under the Influence of some predominant Appetite. They can meet a Lover in the Dark, and venture through a Church-Yard, or a Charnel-house, to indulge
an

an amorous Maggot, though they would start at Twilight, if they passed within an hundred Yards of the same Place, to say their Prayers, or perform any other Act of Religion or Charity. If a Mind contaminated with Vice, a Soul foul with lustful Appetites, can get the better of these common Foibles of the fair Sex, we need not be amazed to find that the lovely Miss *Summers*, shrouded with Virtue and virtuous Principles, and strongly fortified with innate Worth and Innocence, should, on this Occasion, forget to be afraid, and at once disclaim all Belief in Witches, Fairies, Hobgoblins, and other fanciful Spectres, that haunt the Imaginations of weak and vicious Minds. Yes, she did, and now that she Thought herself out of the Reach of *Crofts* and Sir *Thomas*, found her Mind at Ease, all her Faculties alert, and capable of pondering in her own Mind, what was the properest Rout she should take, to shelter her from the Dangers of a Pursuit. That was the first Thought that employed her Mind; for she was wise enough to imagine, that to form a Plan for her future Life, would require mature Deliberation, and was not to be adopted in a Hurry. She confined her Thoughts then to recollect, where she might find a Shelter for some
Time,

Time, till she could have an Opportunity to dispose of herself for Good.

It was in vain to think of concealing herself in that or the neighbouring Counties ; and she judged that in almost any Country Place she would be soon found out ; she therefore determined for *London*, and as she knew the Post-Road lay a Dozen Miles off, she took a Path through the Park, which led to that Road, hoping before Morning to reach *Cowan Gathbury*, where Stages and Waggon went for *Cardigan*, and so on for *London*.

This Resolution settled, she tied her little Bundle in as small Compass as she could, put it under her Arm, and having recommended herself to the Protection of the Almighty, took a last and tender Look of that Kind old Mansion, roused up her Spirits, which began to flag at losing Sight of an Object so familiar to her Eyes, and so greatful to her Mind. The Thoughts of the Motives that induced her to fly, diffused a Chearfulness over her whole Mind, and she nimbly got over the Stile into the high Road, which leads to the Post-Road, and without the least Mixture of Fear, proceeded on her Journey for near two Hours,
in

in which Time she had walked above six Miles, without finding herself the least fatigued.

Hitherto the Moon shone bright, the Night was calm and serene, and she met with no Turning in the Road, to puzzle her about the Way she should take; but now she met with three cross Roads, and she had not the least Notion which of them she should take. She had been but once or twice that Road, to visit a Family that lived about twenty Miles off, but had never taken so much Notice of the Country, as to be able to judge which of these cross Ways was most likely to be the Right; and to compleat her Misfortune, the Night began to darken and grow cloudy. She sat down for some Time to think what she should do, and at last, leaving the Event to Providence, in a Case which left her Understanding nothing to decide, she went on to that leaning to the Left, which she thought was the Direction in which the Place she was going to lay.

She had not travelled above an Hour in this Road, when she fell into a long dark Lane hedged in with Woods on each Side, which

which made the Night Pitch-dark. It was a deep Slough, that she was up to the An-
cles in Mud and Clay every Step she took.
However, she was not discouraged; she
went boldly on, till by the Light of the Stars
she could discern she was near the End of
it : But here Fear succeeded her Fatigue.
She heard at some Distance, two or three
Voices, which she judged to be meeting her.
In all the Way she had not so much as
Thought of meeting any Person Abroad at
that Time of Night, and now that she heard
them approaching her, Fear suggested to her
every possible Misfortune that could happen
to an alone Woman in that dismal Place, at
that dead and solitary Hour.

She had but few Moments of these bitter
Reflections (better imagined than expressed)
when three Ruffians met her. It was just
Moon-light enough to distinguish the Shape
of Objects. They saw it was a Woman, and
accosted her, Come, what have you got un-
der your Arm ? Give it us ; we shall carry
it for you.—One of them taking the Bundle
from her,—Ha, *Jack* ! I believe we have
got an unexpected Booty, to make Amends
for our Disappointment by that d—n'd Dog
at Farmer *Batson's*. Come, my Dear, let
us

us feel your Pockets ; such a Wench as you has no need for Money. — They laid hold of her, and tore off her Pockets, and her Cloak and Cap ; and feeling by the Rustling that her Gown was Silk, stripped her of that too. Thinking they had got all she had, they carried her to the Side of the Road a little into the Thicket, and bound her Hands behind with a Cord, and fastened that to the Root of a Tree, and was about to leave her. She had not uttered one Syllable ; the Dread of such a Meeting deprived her of the Use of Speech ; an universal Tremor shook her whole Frame, and she was little better than in a Swoon, when she heard one of the Villains, when they were gone about ten Paces off, utter a loud Oath to his Companions, saying, I have a Month's Mind to her ; I believe she is young ; but young or old it is all the same in the Dark ; do you stay here, and watch the Coast clear. — D——n me, but it is a good Thought ; let us all be concern'd ; but as she is my Booty, I will begin. — No, D——n me, shan't you ; I mentioned it first, and it shall be my Turn ; let me see who dares contradict it.

The fair Unfortunate heard the horrid Dialect, and wished for Death, or any Thing

to shelter her from the impending Ruin ; she struggled to get loose from the Tree ; and finding that in vain, struck her lovely Head against the Trunk, if possible to dash her Brains out before the horrid Contest should be over. She lifted up her Eyes to Heaven, and implored the Divine Mercy to protect her Innocence. Her Prayers were heard ; Heaven is never deaf to Virtue in Distress : For the barbarous Ruffians from Words, about the Spoil, came to Blows, and continued the Combat so long, that she could hear the Trampling of Horses almost at Hand. The Villains were so intent upon their Quarrel, that the Horsemen were just upon them before they took the Alarm, which Miss *Summers's* Cries gave them. On hearing the Horses near her, she cried out, — For God's Sake, if you are Christians, pity and save a Woman from Robbers and Ravishers ! — Her Voice repeated, stopped the Travellers, and made the Villains take to their Heels, leaving every Thing they had taken from her behind them. They ran into the thickest Part of the Coppice where the Horses could not pursue them ; when one of the Horsemen alighted, and unbound the suffering Maid. She first with bended Knees, and Hand and Eyes uplifted, returned Thanks to God for her miraculous Escape, and then
in

in Words the most grateful and obliging, thanked her Deliverers, who happened to be a Country Farmer, who lived within two or three Miles of *Cowan Gathbury*, where she was going, who was returning with his Man from a Fair, where he had been to sell some Cattle. The honest Farmer pleased with doing Good, asked her what she was, and how she came to be alone at that Time of the Night. She was at some Loss to frame a Lye ; but she made shift to tell him, that she had been at *Carmarthen*, where she had some Relations, and was going to *Cowan Gathbury*, in her Way to *London*, in Order to get into Service ; but that she had been benighted, and missed her Way she believed, for she had wandered about all Night without knowing where she was. The honest Farmer pitied her Story, gathered up the Things the Villains had left, and staid till she had put on her Gown and Cap, and then in a Manner as courteous as his Country Breeding had taught him, begged her to get up behind him, and that he would carry her to the *Black-Lion* at *Cowan Gathbury*, where the Stage and Waggon for *London*, put up, as he was to pass by the Door in his way Home. The Terror of what she had so lately suffered was too much upon her Spirits to permit her to refuse what the honest Farmer offered. By the Help of the Farmer's

Man she got up behind him, and by Break of Day, or about half an Hour after it, arrived safe at the desired Inn.

C H A P. VI.

Containing the Sequel of Miss Summers's Journey.

AS she was coming up to the Inn, it happily occurred to her, by one of those Kind of Impulses for which it is impossible for human Wisdom to account, to caution the Farmer and his Man, not to mention at the Inn any Thing of the Misfortune she had escaped, lest it should expose her to be gazed at, which, she said, she could not bear. The Farmer and his Man promised Silence on that Head, without giving themselves any Trouble in examining her Reasons for such Conduct, which were only known to herself; for she imagined that the Rumour of so uncommon an Accident would bring, not only the People of the Inn, but all their Guests to stare at her, and by that Means expose her to a more narrow Inspection, than what they might make if she passed only for an ordinary Traveller, and perhaps be a Means to discover what she really

really was, which was so much her Interest to conceal, at least till she was at a greater Distance from *Bounty-Park* : And it was happy for her, that Chance suggested that Thought, as we shall see by the Sequel.

The Farmer, who had taken her up in the Dark, as she rode behind him, had no Opportunity to make any Remark upon his Fellow Traveller ; but when she alighted at the Inn, and he had a full View of her Face, he was not so much a Clown as not to be struck with so much Beauty. — Wauns, Mistress, I think no Wonder the Rogues quarelled about that sweet Face, had they seen it in the Light as I do ; Ods dickens, it is enough to spoil a Parson's Preaching ; efackins, I think you are in the Right, not to care to be stared at ; if I look much longer, I shall forget my *Moll*. Ods Niggars, I fancy there is more in the Matter than I am aware of ; but be that as it will, I'll see you safely into the Stage or Waggon before I part with you. I would not for old *Ball*, leave so proper a Damsel to the Hazard of such another Mischance for the World. — Miss *Summers* blushed like the Morning Rose at the Farmer's Compliment, pulled her Bonnet over her Face, and went into the Inn. The Farmer would have

had her sit by the Side of a large Fire in the Kitchen, and pulled the Arm Chair close up to it, for her to sit in ; but she desired to be excused, and begged to be shewed a Room, where she might have some Repose, and desired the Farmer to call for what he pleased, and she would pay for it ; it was but his Due, since he had saved it and her from the Ruffians. The Farmer took the Hint, and did not press her to stay in the publick Room, but made the Bar-Maid, who chanced to be up earlier than ordinary that Morning, shew her into a neat back Parlour, and had some Wine mulled, and carried it in to her himself, and would not stir till she had drank a little of it, and then left her to prepare to go to Bed for two or three Hours, about which Time they expected the Stage-Coach would pass.

Miss *Summers* was highly pleased with the Good-nature of the Farmer, and when alone, and had Time to reflect on the imminent Danger she had so miraculously escaped, could not help owing a particular Hand of Providence in her Deliverance, and poured out her Soul in grateful Praises to that Being, who alone was able to protect her helpless Innocence. She took her
late

late Escape as a sure Prefage of his future Protection ; since she imagined it impossible that she could ever be in greater Danger, than that she had now been delivered from. Cheared and strengthened with this Thought, her Mind resumed its wonted Calmness, and she began to undress herself to go to Rest, which Nature wanted much ; when going towards the Window, which looked into the Stable-Yard, in order to draw the Window-Curtains, the first Object that presented itself to her View, was Mr. *Crofts's* Valet de Chambre, giving Orders to Saddle Post-Horses for his Master with all Expedition. Had she seen a Ghost, or the most terrible Apparition from the infernal Regions, she could not be more terrified ; she started from the Window, and trembled every Limb of her like an Aspin Leaf, a cold Sweat ran down her lovely Cheeks, and she was ready to sink into the Earth with Fear ; for, as she knew nothing of his Journey, she concluded that her Flight was somehow discovered, and that this Posting Journey was in Pursuit of her. She was in Terror lest he should find that a young Woman came into the Inn ; and in Agony lest he or his Servant should ask any Questions of the Farmer, whose Prudence she suspected would not be capable to conceal her Story.

ry. In short, every Idea that could perplex her occurred in an Instant to her Memory, heightened with one more shocking than all the rest, the Remembrance of what *Crofts* had attempted at *Bounty-Park*, which she Thought, if he discovered her under her present Circumstances, he might again renew. To heighten her Dread, she heard his Voice in the Kitchen, in Chat with the Farmer that had saved her, and expected every Moment that her Case would be the Subject of their Conversation. It is impossible to express her Agony, and utterly impracticable for her to frame to herself any Scheme for her Escape from the present Danger. However, in a few Minutes she had some Glimmering of Hope, she heard the Ostler wish Mr. *Crofts* a good Journey, and the Sound of the Posting Horn going out of the Inn. Thus far she thought Providence had given her a second Delivery ; but she thought she ought to make use of her Reason, as much as it was in her Power, to prevent Dangers of this Kind, by her long Stay at the Inn, or keeping the publick Road in her intended Journey to *London*. If she could have found any Pretext to the Farmer for quitting the Inn that Minute, she would have done it ; but she could frame no Excuse, but what might
either

either betray her Secret, or give Suspicion that she had one ; therefore she was constrained, though under the greatest Apprehensions, to throw herself for some Time upon the Bed ; but not to rest, for every the least Noise alarmed her ; and if she but shut her Eyes, her wakeful Fancy represented Mr. *Crofts*, Sir *Thomas*, and all the Family at *Bounty-Park*, as entering her Chamber to force her back again. In this Manner she continued for near three Hours, till she heard all the Family were stirring. She then got up, rung the Bell, and desired the Farmer might speak to her. He came in obliging Haste, and with an honest Warmth asked how she had rested. — Indeed, says she, I have not rested at all ; the Noise of the House, and the Fright I have been in, dwelt so much upon my Spirits, that I have not shut my Eyes. — Lackaday, Mistress, I am sorry for that, replied the Honest Farmer, you cannot sure pretend to go forward on your Journey, without Rest and Refreshment ; indeed you must not ; and if your Business be not very pressing to go forward, if you'll accept of a Bed at my House, and such Chear as the Country affords, good Faith and Troth you shall have a hearty Welcome, and my *Moll* will make much of you ; if you have a Mind to stay a Month,

you shall be as quiet and safe as at your Mother's House; do, sweet Mistress, take a Friend's Advice for once, and don't pretend to go on to a strange Place, and strange Company, till you are fit to Travel, and till we can light of somebody going, who may take Care of such a young Woman as you are, and protect you from rude Travellers.

As the Farmer had told her before, that his House lay off the publick Road, and his Offer discovered a plain honest Heart, and suited exactly with her Circumstances, she accepted of it with very little Ceremony; and the Farmer gave old *Ball* his Feed of Oats, and borrowed a Pillion from the Landlord of the Inn, on which she was mounted, and arrived safe at *Hazlewood Farm*.

Moll, the Farmer's Wife, received *Hodge* (for that was the good Man's Name) and his new Guest with open Arms, and with as much Politeness as could be expected from plain Nature, without Art or Disguise. She conceived a great Liking to Miss *Summers* at first Sight, which was much increased when she was told the imminent Danger from whence the Husband had rescued her.

She

She provided in an Instant the best Things the Farm could afford, and pressed her to take a Refreshment, and then put her to a warm Bed, where she fell into a sound Sleep till towards Evening, and waked with her Mind at perfect Ease, and pleased that she had thus far succeeded in her Enterprize.

When the Farmer's Wife heard her stirring, she came into her Room, and enquired kindly after her Health, and if she wanted any thing in her Power to supply her with. Miss *Summers* returned the obliging Good-nature in the Woman, and told her that she was doubly happy in meeting so accidentally with People of so much Good-nature, and Humanity, and begged only to know when the Stage would go next for *London*, as she was uneasy to proceed on her Journey now, that by their Good-nature she had recovered from the Fright into which the Disaster of the preceding Night had thrown her.

Indeed, replied the kind Hostess, you need not think of that in a Hurry; there is something about you, that tells me you are more than what you would make us believe you are, and that has engaged me to you as

much as to my own Child. I shall not pry into what you are pleased to keep a Secret, but let me entreat you not to think of leaving me on a sudden; but whether you like it or not, if you go by the Stage you must stay till this Day se'nnight; so that you must rest contented where you are till then, and perhaps before that Time comes, we shall prevail on you to give us some more of your Company; at least, nothing in my Power shall be wanting to make your Abode in this poor Hutt agreeable. My Daughter *Gillian* will be pure Company for you; she has been Waiting-maid to the 'Squire's Lady that was, and knows how to behave herself to Gentlefolks; and though I say it that should not say it, she is a notable Girl, and will be proud to oblige you: I'll call her in, that you may see her and my Son *Dick*; though he is but a Farmer's Son, yet he is a rare Lad, and respected by all the Damfels in the Parish, and let me tell you, might have been married to Mrs. *Margery*, the Merchant's Daughter at *Bellhive*, who is worth a Power of Money; but the Rogue is nice; he would not have her, and all her Pelf, because she is not altogether so handsome, nor so well bred, forsooth! as he would have her.

The

The good Woman's Clack went so fast, it was to no Purpose for Miss *Summers* to attempt to make a Reply to the good-natur'd Bent of her Speech. She was obliged to be contented to let her call in her Son and Daughter. The Daughter accosted her with some awkward Curtesies, and the young Cub gaped at the Sight of her as if he had seen a Vision; he could not take his Eyes from her Face, nor utter a Word if it had been to save him from the Gallows. But the Mother's Tongue was not so hamstring'd.—How now, *Dick*! what do you stare so for, Man? Did you never see a handsome Lass before? Why don't you salute her as you see your Sister did? Have you forgot all your Manners? If you were in Company with *Doll* in the Park, or *Sukey* at the Mill, you had been flabbering them all over by this Time; and yet now you stand like a Lout, without offering a civil Kifs: I warrant you, young Mistrefs won't bite you, you Clown you.—La! Mother, how you so shame a Body; I was never so surpris'd in my Life before. Odd so, with your Leave, pretty Damfel, I would kifs those pretty Lips, since my Mother says it is good Breeding.—He stepped forwards, laid his clumsy Paws about her Neck, and gave her two or three hearty

heartly Smacks, which she was obliged to suffer.—La now, see you there, Mother! I can be as well bred as the best of them, if kissing be all that's wanting. Odds-niggers! I should never be tired of such sweet Sport: I hope, Mother, this pretty Lass won't leave us this Twelvemonths? Efakins! I must have a Game at Romps round the Haycocks.—Oh, fye! Brother, returned *Gillian*, you must not let your Tongue run so before your Betters. Ye are ever saying too little or too much: Will you never learn to be polite, Man? I warrant, Mistrefs and I find out Sport without your clumsy Help, and your Romps round the Haycocks, that's only fit for Milkmaids, such as your Sweatheart *Sukey* at the Mill, and the other you know where.—Ay, marry-come-up, Mrs. Pert! you think nobody's Clack has a Right to run but your own, and you would teach the Gentlewoman, for I'm sure she can be no less, to be as coy and skittish as you are, and never suffer any body to come near her, but your shipping Footmen, with their Monkey's Tails hanging to their Noddles; because, forsooth! they can make a Scrape and a Bow, and call you Miss, forsooth!—They were going on in this Kind of Jangle, when honest *Hodge* the Farmer came up to Miss's Relief; asked if she
had

had rested better than she had done at the Inn ; and to entertain her, told her the 'Squire's Huntsman was hard by, breaking a young Hawk, which would be some Sport to her, if she would step out to the Close to see it. She was glad of any Opportunity to be released from the present Inundation of Impertinence, took *Gillian* by the Hand, and followed the Farmer where he led her. She was well enough entertained, while the Huntsman was training the Hawk to the Lure ; but when he let fly a young Pigeon, and she saw the Hawk mount into the Air, and fall with its Pounces perpendicular upon the harmless Prey, which the Blow struck dead to the Ground ; she shriek'd for the murder'd Pigeon, and could not reconcile to her tender Nature how Mankind should take Pleasure in such wanton Barbarity ; the very Thought of it brought Tears into her Eyes, which the Farmer perceiving, he carried her Home, where *Moll* had got Supper ready.

C H A P. VII.

*Containing Miss Summers's Adventures at
Hazlewood Farm.*

AS Miss conjectured, that it was best for her to lie concealed for sometime, till any Search that was made for her by Lady Bountiful was over, she was under the less Uneasiness at the necessary Stay she was obliged to make at the Farm-house ; and the more so, as she found herself every way respected, and treated with great Tenderness, by the honest Farmer and all his Family, who for some time left her no Room to complain, unless from a little too much Talkativeness, which prevailed on the female Side of the House, which she put up with, the best way she could.

Nothing remarkable happened for the first two or three Days to disturb her Tranquility. The Morning after her Arrival, whether out of Fear of any Accident that might happen to her by keeping her Money, Watch and Jewels sewed up in her Petticoat, or perhaps prompted to it by a little Spice of female Vanity, to shew that she had
such

such Trinkets ; she unfewed them, and gave the Money and Jewels to the Farmer to lay up for her, and kept the Watch in her Chamber, to inform her how the Time passed, which lay pretty heavy upon her Hands, as she had no Books to amuse her, and found little Satisfaction in *Gillian's* Company, who had all the pert, prattling Air of a Country Waiting-maid, without one Grain of Sense to make her Company tolerable.

The Sight of the Watch, Money, and other Toys, confirmed the Farmers and his Wife that there was some Mystery in their fair Guest, and that her Pretence of going to *London* in Search of Service, was but a Blind to some other Secret ; for her Manner, even to such bad Judges as they were, and the Equipage of a Gold Watch, Chain, Etwee, &c. ill suited the Notion of a Waiting-Maid. Notwithstanding their Partiality to their Daughter *Gillian*, they allowed Miss *Summers*, who had assumed the feigned Name of *Sally Dickens*, to be quite another Woman, and fitter to be the 'Squire's Lady, than Waiting-Maid to any Person in the County. They had shewed her, upon the bare Strength of her Appearance, a great deal of Respect ; but on seeing these Things,
it

it was vastly heightened ; and wife *Moll*, who thought herself a very notable Woman, told her Husband *Hodge*, that this young Woman was certainly some Gentleman's Child, who had left her Friends on some Disgust ; that they had best make up a Match between her and their Son *Dick*, since what she had would go near to stock a little Farm ; and perhaps her Friends, when reconciled, might make his Fortune.

The honest Farmer was accustomed to be governed by his Spouse, and as his Understanding was not of the first Rate, he could foresee no reasonable Objection to her wife Scheme.

Dick was called, and informed of the Design, and *Gillian* assisted at giving him Directions how he should behave to gain his Mistress's Heart. They laid their Plan, as they thought, with so much Wisdom, that they looked upon the Match as concluded ; and the Farmer called for a Mug of stout brown Beer, to drink to the Success of it. *Dick* pledged his Father, cut a Caper as high as the Ceiling, and swore he hoped to be near about her Quarters in less than a Week.

They

They allowed her to rest herself for a Day or two, before the hopeful Swain pretended to declare his Passion. He was in a mighty Quandary how to break the Matter to his fair Mistress; and his Sister gave him many Opportunities, by leaving them alone on frivolous Pretences; but poor *Richard* was always tongue-tied on these happy Occasions, and could only gape his Meaning, which Miss was far from explaining as he would have her. At last the Sight of a Rival got the better of his rustic Modesty.

Mrs. *Gillian* had a neighbouring Farmer's Son, who made Love to her, whom she received with some coquettish Airs, that had by this Time pretty nigh cooled the young Farmer's Flame, who was a sprightly young Fellow, and had picked up a little Knowledge of the World, by being often with the young 'Squire of the Manor, and his Companions at hunting Matches, in which the young Farmer was very useful, as he was extreamly lucky in finding a Hare, and starting the Game.

Young *George*, after about a Week's Absence from the coy *Gillian*, came to push
the

the Matter home to her, being resolved to stand no longer shilly-shally, but gain the important Prize, or make one grand Effort to tear her from his Memory.

Gillian, who thought by his Absence she had lost him for Good, received him with a kinder Smile than ordinary, and introduced him to her fair Companion, the supposed *Sally Dickens*; but the Sight of that lovely Maid put all Thoughts of the homely *Gillian* out of the young Farmer's Head; he gazed himself in a Moment into a most desperate Fit of Love, and had so little Prudence as to declare it before his former haughty Mistress. As he had been told Miss *Sally* was a young Woman going up to *London* for Service, (for they kept their other Suspicions to themselves) after he had made her a Leg, given her a hearty Smack after the Country Fashion, he gazed upon her a little, and after a short Pause, takes her by the Hand,—Faith and Troth, Mistress, you are a proper Damsel, and too good to go to that naughty Place *London* for Service; faith we must not part with you out of the County: But since Mrs. *Gillian* there has so often said me Nay, if you'll put up with such a Man as I am, for better for worse, good Faith, Mistress, I'll
set

set you down Mistress of a good well-stock'd Farm, and that's better by far than *London* Service. What say you, Sweetheart, I love few Words, is it a Bargain?

Miss *Summers* blushed to see herself used so familiarly by the Country Booby, and scarce knew how to reply to so odd a Declaration, as not knowing how affronting him might be taken by the honest Farmer, whom she thought it a Sin, as well as imprudent, to disoblige. However, *Gillian* enraged at the Affront offered to her Charms, and the open Rebellion of her quondam Slave, saved her the Trouble of a Reply.—Marry come up, my dirty Cousin! how dare you affront the Gentlewoman; you should wipe your Mouth, you Clown you, when you speak to such as she; she is Meat for your Betters, and so pray, Mr. Loggerhead, march off to your dirty Dairy-maid at *Haybill*, and don't plague any Body here with your Impertinence.—Ha, Mrs. *Gillian*! Are you nettled? I hope I have not affronted this pretty Maid? I'm sure I would not for the best Team I ever saw; but I would have you, Mrs. Minx, to know, that I can get better than you at any Time; and you and your Skipkennel *Jack* the 'Squire's Footman, that met t'other Night
down

down amongst the Willows, by the same Token he gave you a Pair of Garters of his Mother's weaving, may pig together; take that, Mistress, for you, dirty Dairy-maid; I warrant you think nobody knows who and who's together but yourself—*Gillian* threw a Ball of Worsted, she had in her Hand, at his Head, and bestowed on him a Volley of Country Epithets in such a passionate loud Tone, that the Noise brought *Richard* and the Farmer; who being told by *Gillian* that *George* had the Impudence to make Love to Mrs. *Sally*, turned *George* out of Doors, and forbid him the House.—You see, says *Moll* to her hopeful Son and Heir apparent, that other People are not meally-mouth'd as you are; and if you don't make Haste, somebody else will snap her out of your Hands——Odds-dickens, Mother, that's true! I'll go this Minute, and tell her a Piece of my Mind; that Dog *George* has put me into such a Passion, I shall be afraid of nothing: Away then *Dick*, and God speed the Plough.

The passionate Swain wiped his Mouth, stroaked streight his Steinkirk, gartered up his Hose, and picked the Straws from his Shoes, and went up to Miss *Sally*'s Room in a violent Hurry. He would have spoke
the

the Moment he entered the Threshold, but a Look from the fair Object of his Devotions struck him once more dumb, and it is probable he would have continued as silent, as a Mute in the Grand Signior's Seraglio, if *Gillian*, who still in a Passion, had not turned the Discourse to his Purpose.—A very pretty Fellow you are indeed, Brother *Dick*, to let such a paltry Fellow as *George* make Love to your Mistress in your Father's House; when you dare not, you are such a Sheep, as open your Mouth to her.—Indeed, Sister, I must own I have been a little bashful or so; but I hope Mistress won't think the worse of me, tho' I don't speak so fast as that Scatterpate *George*, since I say it, though simple as I stand here, I can do more than he can say.—Miss *Summers* could not help staring at the Puppy, which he looked on as a good Omen, and took Courage to squat himself down on the Chair by her, and looking up with a thoughtless Gape in her Face.—Tell me, sweet Mrs. *Sally*, am not I another guess Man, than that Rattle-scul that was just now here? Am not I?—Miss replied, half bursting into a Laugh, indeed you are, Mr. *Richard*, quite another Man in my Opinion.—Look you there now, Sister; efakins! she is my own; we shall be pure happy! shan't us, Mrs. *Sally*.

Sally. When shall we send to the Clerk to proclaim the Banns ; do let it be in a short Time, for I'm in a woundy Hurry, till you and I get between a Pair of Sheets : Odd-bodikins ! how my Mother and Father will leap for Joy. Why don't you speak, Mrs. *Sally* ? you be'nt dull ?

Though the Oaf's Courtship would at any other Time have diverted her, yet at present her Mind, always upon the Watch for Fear of Danger, suggested to her the Unhappiness of her Lot, that her unlucky Form should beget Thoughts of her in Minds incapable of any Degree of Delicacy, and where the Obligations she was under for her late Delivery, and the present Protection they afforded her, made it dangerous to treat the Insult they ignorantly offered her, as it deserved, and yet more difficult to behave so as not to give Encouragement to their Folly ; since their Ignorance would explain Good-nature, and even common Civility, as a Compliance with their Whim. A thousand dismal Thoughts crouded into her Mind at once, and overwhelmed her with so much Sorrow, that she could not hinder the Tears from bursting into her Eyes, which Mrs. *Gillian* observing, had by Chance the Discretion to take off the Puppy
her

her Brother from bating her, and whisper'd him he had said enough for the first Time, and to leave the Room, for that she believed Mrs. *Sally* was not well.

Miss *Summers* overheard the Whisper, and improved the Hint to get rid of the Sister that she might be at Liberty to enjoy her own Reflections in private. She told *Gillian* when she asked her what was the Matter that she seemed under so much Concern, that she was taken suddenly very ill, and would lie down on the Bed to try to get some Rest. The other left her immediately, and went to the old People whom she found with her Brother *Richard* in high Spirits, on the Account he had given them of the first Onset. She told them Mrs. *Sally* was taken ill, and had desired to be alone the Moment *Richard* left the Room. Ay, Ay, says *Moll*, it works, the young Woman is smitten, Lovers always desire Solitude in the Beginning of the Disease. The Symptoms are good, Son *Dick*, push it home Boy, I warrant in a Day or two, she will desire to be alone only with you. Wauns Mother, I hope so too; suppose I should go up now and ask what was the Matter with her; I warrant she only wanted to get rid of *Gillian* there, that she and I might chat freely:

freely : Ods heart, she is no more sick than I am, it is only a Pretence.

Mrs. *Gillian*, out of a Spirit of Contradiction to Brother *Dick*, opposed his going back to the Room, but the old Folks, unwilling to disappoint young Hopeful, over-ruled her Opinion, and that young Creature had the Mortification to see the Looby enter the Room, where she had just thrown herself upon the Bed, giving loose to her Tears and heart-piercing Sighs, and bemoaning to herself her miserable Fate, that seem'd to abandon her to a Succession of Misfortunes. Her Back was towards the Door, when the Puppy entered, which he opened softly, and perhaps he had been at the Bedside e'er she had observed him, if the Noise of the Hobnails in his Shoes on the Floor had not given her the Alarm. She started up in a violent Hurry, and in the first Transport could not help asking, with an angry Tone and Look, in the same Style as if she had been at Lady *Bountiful's*, How now ? Whence proceeds this Insolence, that you dare steal upon my Privacy ? Be gone, and learn your Distance. Her Voice and Air struck the Clown with such a Tremor that he had scarce Limbs to carry him out. He made no Reply, but trotted back to

to his Dame, and told her he believed the young Woman was mad ; that she got up off the Bed in such a fiery Fume, and bid him be gone and keep his Distance with such a haughty Air, that if she had been a Duchess she could do no more, and almost frightened him out of his Wits with her Looks : Ods Bodikings, the Wench is as proud as the Devil since that Rogue *George* spoke of setting her down Mistress of a Farm ; but efakins, I would not have her give herself these skittish Airs to me, or mayhap she may repent it. Out you great Looby you, replied *Gillian*, you make her repent it, will your Calf's Head beat her because she is angry at you for stealing to her Room when she was lain down to rest ? I knew she would take it ill, and what well-bred modest Woman would not, to see a Man come to her Bed-side, especially such a Cub as you are, that has no more Havance in you than a Colt. I believe *Gillian*, says the Mother, you are in the Right, he should not have gone up, but you must make his Peace when you are in Bed together. The young Woman is good-natured, and will not keep Anger long. Do, sweet Sister, speak a good Word for me, and you shall have a new Gown at the Wedding, Girl, if I should sell the young Colt Uncle gave me, to purchase it. Well-then, I will,

Brother *Dick*, but it is upon this Condition only, that you are ruled by me for the future, and not pretend to be meddling with Matters above your Understanding, and if I don't throw her into your Arms, say I am not *Gillian*.

Miss *Summers* pretended, the Remainder of the Day, to be out of Order, that she might avoid the Company of the House, who were now become odious to her, as she judg'd that both young and old had formed the same foolish Plot upon her Person. She wished for the Day, on which the Stage was to pass with greater Eagerness than a Prisoner for the Day of his Liberty, and resolved, till that Time come, to avoid, if possible, coming to any Explanation with her new Lover, that she might not chagrine the Family till she was ready to leave it. But they put it out of her Power to keep that Resolution ; for *Gillian* teased her Night and Day with her Brother's Passion, as she called it, and would not take an evasive Answer, but began to be abusive when Miss pretended to believe the whole was a Jest designed to divert her, and to treat it with Ridicule. I would have you to think, says *Gillian*, with a pert Toss of the Head, that my Brother is not to be made a Jest of, and that
he

he may get as good as you at any time, for all your Gold Watch and your Trinkum-Trankums; marry come up, now where would have been all these fine Things you are so proud of and something else, if my Father had not met you in the Lane? and yet you must, forsooth, turn up your Nose and make your Game of his only Son; that is not grateful, let me tell you, Mrs. Sally. The Farmer had come in by Accident just as she was in the Middle of this Speech; he saw Miss's Bosom heave and pant with Vexation, and when she mentioned Ingratitude, she could not help bursting out into Tears with this Exclamation: Good God! into what a Labyrinth am I fallen! and turning to the honest Farmer, whose Eyes began to moisten with Sympathy, tell me, dear Sir, what shall I do to express my Gratitude for the good Offices you have done me? Teach me in what Manner it is in my Power to make you a Return for those signal Benefits I have received by your Means, and I shall think myself happy, provided you do not mention a Match between me and your Son: By all the Ties of Charity and Humanity I conjure you not to tease me, or suffer me to be teased with a Subject that makes me wretched; for Oh, Sir! you little know what Anguish I suffer.

May the Agonies of my Mind be a Stranger to this peaceful Habitation. To-morrow the Stage passes, I shall be gone from your House, and if you desire it only as a Token of Gratitude, take all the Money I gave you to keep ; I will depend on Providence for my Support, and think myself happy that I can, in any Measure content you. She spoke this with the Tears flowing down her lovely Cheeks, and in such a soft Tone, that the Farmer must have been less than Man, not to have been affected with it. Cease, sweet Mistress, to torment yourself, you owe me nothing but good Will, and that I see you have enough of. Indeed I thought once my Son and you would have made a Match on't, but as you take on so, and are so much against it, neither I, nor any belonging to me, shall mention it. You shall have every Penny of your own Money again : God forbid I should wrong such sweet Innocence ; but indeed you must not think of going with the Stage, but stay 'till the Middle of the Week, when 'Squire *North's* Coach is going up to Town with only his Housekeeper in it ; she will be glad of your Company, and that will be better than going in strange Company ; and I shall then be sure you do not leave us in a Pet.

Tho'

Tho' Miss dreaded a longer Stay in a Family where she knew their Resolves and Behaviour depended upon Whim and Caprice more than on their Understanding, yet she could not with any Decency get off waiting for the 'Squire's Coach, whose Housekeeper she had seen at the Farmer's House, as it was manifestly preferable to the Stage, and therefore assumed a Cheerfulness to which her Heart was a Stranger, and told the Farmer that, as he desired it, she should stay till then, but hoped that for that Evening, she might be left alone as much as possible, as she found herself out of Order, and that she hoped Rest would restore her Health.

The Farmer retired, and took his Daughter along with him, who from that Moment, as she saw all Hopes of a Match between her and her Booby Brother vanish'd, conceived a strong Antipathy against the unfortunate Fair; and she was not long before she had fresh Cause of Chagrine, for next Morning she intercepted a Letter directed for Miss *Summers* from young *George*, who finding he had no Access to the Family, bribed a Boy belonging to the Farmer to deliver the fair Stranger a

Letter, wherein he makes an Apology in a pretty handsome Manner, for the Abruptness of his last Declaration, makes fresh Offers of his Love, boasts of his Wealth, and lets fall some slighting Expression of haughty Mrs. *Gillian*, and in the End cautions her not to trust too much to Farmer *Hodge*, who, tho' an honest Man himself, yet was led by the Nose by his Wife, and some tricking Relations of hers, who were no better than they should be.

This Letter the Boy was lurking about for an Opportunity to deliver Miss, when she came out of her Chamber, and hearing the Door open, and fancying she was coming, pull'd the Letter out of his Bosom and had it in his Hand, when Mrs. *Gillian* popp'd upon him, and cast her Eyes upon it before he could hide it. She asking what he had got he was shuffling in such Hurry into his Breast. The artless Boy made some frivolous Excuse, which encreased her Curiosity, she laid violent Hands upon the poor Lad, and took the Letter from him by Force.

The Noise of the Struggle between them brought Miss *Summers* to the Chamber-Door to see what was the Matter, just as Mrs. *Gillian* was going to open the Letter, when the Boy cried out, why do you open
it ?

it ? It is not for you, it is for the Gentlewoman there. Miss *Summers* seeing a Letter in her Hand, and hearing what the Boy said, was amazed how a Letter could be directed to her, and reflecting of a sudden that it might contain something she wished to conceal, for she had no Idea of *George*, hastily snatch'd the Letter out of Mrs. *Gillian's* Hand : How now, Mistress ! How dare you presume to open a Letter directed to me ; has your Service at the 'Squire's taught you no better Manners ? And looking on the Direction in a Hand she had never seen, and addressed to Miss *Sally Dickens*. Who gave you the Letter ? Why, says the Boy, it was young Farmer *George* gave it me this Morning, and desired me to give it you privately, but Mrs. *Gillian* there forced it from me. Oh ! is it from him, replied the pretended Miss *Sally*, in a softer Tone, then Miss excuse me for being so hasty, you have a Right to read it ; open it and see what is in it, if you please, for I have nothing to say to it, or the Author of it, and then returned to her Chamber, shutting the Door after her.

Mrs. *Gillian* took the Letter, and read herself into the greatest Rage imaginable. What, and am I the Scorn of the Bumpkin !

that dirty Dung-Cart *George*, and for the Sake of this chitty-faced Minx here, whom nobody knows ; but I'll be revenged of them both, I'll spoil her Cheeks for her, and teach that lubberly Clown to write of me and my Family with greater Respect. She was in twenty Minds to have gone that Minute to Miss's Chamber, and ferret her out with hard Thumps as she term'd it, but seeing her Mother pass by just in the nick, when she had her Hand upon the Latch, she ran to her with open Mouth, shewed her the amorous Epistle, and told her with what an haughty Art that proud Minx chid her only for pretending to open that dirty Letter, and after all, when she had got it forsooth, she would not look upon it, but threw it to me, with such a disdainful Toss of her Head, endeavouring to mimick her, truly as if I had been but Dirt ; I wonder, added she, what my Father sees in the unmannerly, long-shanked Doudy, that we must all be Slaves to her, and bear her Humours so long.

Moll the Farmer's Wife was highly incensed against *George* for the unmannerly Reflection cast on her and her Relations, and not a little piqued that she should desert her Child *Gillian* for the Stranger, whom she did not think

think half so deserving as her own Brat, for the Crow thinks her own Chick the whitest, but she knew not how to be revenged on both ; though her Disposition for Mischief was pretty much on Fire, yet her Invention was not fertile enough to form any Project that could reach one or other of them. However, when one or two Women at once are bent upon Revenge, the Devil, or a third, generally finds out the Means. Well, says *Moll*, say you nothing of this Letter to your Brother, or your Father, but step now down to Sister *Cleck*'s, and desire her to come and speak to me, without telling her what it is for, and I warrant she and I contrive something to plague that Rogue *George* and his new Sweetheart ; let me alone to bring down Mistress's Stomach, I warrant I make her glad to marry *Dick* out of a Shitten Clout, as the Saying is, and mayhap mayn't after all let him take her. Away, good *Gillian*, there is something more than Nits in my Head at present, Sister *Cleck* will help me to think of something that may do Mischief to somebody.

Gillian was more than ordinary fond of the Errand, and though her Aunt *Cleck* was above a Mile off, and a pretty *Welch*

kind of a Road, yet she and the old Succubus were returned in little more than an Hour. But as the Reader may guess by the two or three preceeding Pages, that I have been preparing Miss *Summers* for some Disaster, so to give them an Opportunity to employ their Invention for some Moments in trying to guess what it is that is to befall her, I shall put an End to the Chapter; and as I foresee the greatest Conjuror of you all cannot guess at it, the Contents of the next will just give you a Hint sufficient to whet your Appetite for the Chapter itself.

C H A P. VIII.

Containing the Women's malicious Contrivance to ruin and expose Miss Summers.

GOODY Cleck had no sooner arriv'd than *Moll*, *Gillian* and she retired to the Barn as a Place of greater Secrecy for their hellish Purpose; there Goody *Moll* opened the State of their Grievances against her innocent Guest, and informed her of every Circumstance relating to her Husband's

band's meeting her, rescuing her from the Robbers, and exaggerated as an Act of the highest Impudence and Ingratitude her Refusal to marry her hopeful Son *Richard*. Young *George* the Farmer had his Share of the Invective, and the Scandal he had uttered against her worthy Relations was remembered with a proper Empasis.

Old touthless Goody *Cleck* heard the Charge with the Calmness of a *Welsh* Judge, but when it was finished, she railed against the Parties concerned with all the Malice of an incensed Fury, ‘ Cuss upon the Rogue
 ‘ does he call your Relations tricky. I
 ‘ would have the ill-begotten Villain to
 ‘ know we are as honest as any of his lousy
 ‘ Kindled. What though we ben’t so rich,
 ‘ yet non of us was pillol’d, as his Aunt was,
 ‘ for stealing the ’Squire’s Tulkeys. And
 ‘ what a Fool was your good Man to bling
 ‘ home that young Witch to his House to
 ‘ bleed so much Mischief and slight his own
 ‘ Child ; but let me alone to be revenged of
 ‘ them both. Then scratching her trembling
 ‘ Noddle, Oh ! I have it, you say she has
 ‘ a Gold Watch, some Money, and a great
 ‘ many fine Nicknacks. I wallent she never
 ‘ came honestly by them. What do you
 ‘ know

know but she may be some Lady's Woman who has robbed her Mistress, and run away with these fine Things. As I hope for Mercy, Sister, replied Goody *Moll*, you have hit the Nail in the Head, as sure as Eggs is Eggs she is no better than a Thief. For now I think on't, if she had been good for aught, what had she to do out of a House at that Time of the Night my Husband met with her? Ten to one but she is one of the Gang that pretended to rob her, and that was a Contrivance between her and the Villains to get into our House, that she might let them in some Night to rob us. God preserve us, Sister, what a wicked World is this! What a happy Thing it was that my Son *Dick* did not marry a Thief, and that we have not been killed in our Beds by that wicked Woman and her Crew! Now I see it is as plain as the Nose in your Face why she was so shy to be seen by Strangers ever since she came here, and why she would not go to Church, it was for fear somebody would have known and discovered her, and perhaps she may be a Papist or a Jacobite, for there are no Thieves I believe of our Profession: Mercy on us, what a Vixen have I been fostering in my Bosom, and treating as if she had been somewhat, the best Bed and the finest Sheets, and the best
Cheer

Cheer I had was not good enough for Madam, but I warrant I shall see her as naked as she was born in the House of Correction.

Oh la! Mother, says malicious *Gillian*, with a Grin and a Shrug, How I shall be pleased to see that dirty Damsel with her fine white Hands a beating of Hemp, and how that Loggerhead *George* will stare when his fine Gewgaw Mistress is tried at the Session for Vellony! Oh dear me, it rejoices my Heart, I think we'll be even with him for his Flout at me; let us tell Veather that he may get the Constable to take her up, and carry her before the Justice immediately, and I shall leap out of my Skin for Joy, to see how the proud Slut will stare when she sees she is found out—Hold you there, cried Goody *Cleck*, and Mother *Moll*, both speaking at the same time, we must not tell *Hodge* till the Thing is done, or she'll work upon his silly good Nature so with her fine Words, for she has such a smooth Tongue of her own she would make one believe Butter would not melt in her Mouth, tho' Cheese would not choak her. No, continued *Moll*, Farmer *Ralph* in the Grange, the Constable of our Hundred, I'll send *Wat* for him, and give him a Lesson to whip her up before my Sheep *Hodge* thinks aught of the Matter,

Matter, and I warrant if she is once in his Clutches, all her Caterwauling will not work her out of them again, till his Worship has examined her.

The hellish Plot being laid by the old Hags and the young Imp, *Wat* was immediately dispatched for Mr. Constable *Ralph*, and in the mean Time the old Aunt *Cleck* was introduced to the unhappy Victim of their Revenge, and behaved to her with all the fawning Arts possible, as if no Mischief had been designed: Good-lack-a-Day, sweet Mistress, says the old Witch, how my Heart ached to hear the Condition you was in, sweet Soul, when Brother *Hodge* saved you from the Ruffians; God's Blessing on his Heart for freeing you from their vile Clutches, I warrant he thanks God for it all the Days of his Life.

With this kind of Cant the old Jezabel entertained Miss *Summers* every now and then, casting a malicious side Leer, with saucer Eyes, at sister *Moll* and *Gillian*, and shooting out her treacherous Tongue as often as Miss looked about, till *Wat* brought them Word, that the Farmer was come; they left her with malicious Ceremony,

ny, and went to give their Instrument his hellish Instructions.

At the first Sight of old Goody *Cleck*, the unhappy Miss *Summers* felt a Shock in her Mind, which she could not account for. Its true the old Woman had no very amiable Appearance, yet that young Creature had too much good Sense and good Nature to be shocked at the Effects of old Age, and natural Infirmities; these would rather have created Respect, at least Sympathy and Compassion, especially to any Friend of the Farmer's, whom she looked upon, next to Lady *Bountiful*, as the greatest Benefactor she had on Earth. Yet in Spight of these natural and benevolent Prejudices in Favour of the old Woman, her Soul started at the Sight of her, and when she, *Moll* and *Gillian* left the Room, her Soul by a kind of preternatural Divination, shrunk as if conscious of some independing Danger, a sudden Tremour seized her all over, and her Nose dropt some Drops of Blood. Heavens, cry'd the lovely Fair, what is the Matter with me? Something heavy, something unaccountable to my Reason oppresses my Spirits, and falling devoutly on her Knees by the Bed-side; ' Oh, thou ' most high, in whom I put my trust and
' so le

‘ sole Confidence, support, guide and di-
‘ rect me, if it is thy Will to afflict me
‘ with new Trials, grant me thy Aid to
‘ bear them, and preserve my Innocence,
‘ since it’s thee alone that can defend me a-
‘ gainst the Snares of this World, and the
‘ Blindness of my own Passion.’

She was yet on her Knees, and in the Midst of these pious Ejaculations, when the barbarous Crew, ushered by their Agent the Constable and his Staff, rudely burst open the Door. She turned about her Face, all bathed with Tears, and started from her Knees at so uncommon an Appearance. The Sight of a fine Woman in Tears, and in the highest Act of Devotion, startled the Constable, tho’ one of the roughest of the Tribe of Catchpoles; and out of Respect he had turned his Back, and was going out of the Room, when the vile *Cleck* pushed him in again; Hey-Day, crys the old Beldam, what a Thief at her Prayers! Are you religious in your Rogueries, or do you expect soon to be tucked up, that you are already preparing for a Halter! Come, Mr. Constable *Ralph*, this Mistress here, for all so demure as she looks, is no better than a Thief, I charge her with Vellony,

Vellony, and desire you to carry her before his Worship.

As the first Appearance of the Constable, his uncouth Aspect, his Staff, and the abrupt Intrusion of the whole Company, shocked Miss *Summers* so much, that if she had not taken hold of the Curtain of the Bed, she had certainly dropped down, but when she understood their Errand, and heard the Epithet of Thief applied to her, conscious of her Innocence, her Soul rouzed all its Faculties, shook off in an Instant every Symptom of Fear, and with a noble Pride, looked upon the whole Posy with Contempt; and with great Calmness replied, ‘ Good Woman, your Age makes you doat, and I have no Answer to make to your Impertinence, but if this honest Man, who seems to be in some Authority, and I hope in his Senses, will tell me on what Account he breaks in thus rudely upon my Privacy, I shall be obliged to him.’

The Air and Majesty with which she delivered herself, so much beyond what the Constable expected, who, by the bye, tho’ he was a malicious Knave, yet was no Fool, created in him a Respect, and made him boggle a little at the Execution of his Office,

Office, believing that she might be some Person of Credit, and that he should be brought into Trouble about it. Look you now, replied the Clown, hur hope young Mistrefs you won't blame me, and faith hur thought I should see some run-away beggarly Thief, which I should have taken Charge of, on Neighbour *Cleck's* Word ; but good Troth, hur do not know what to make of the Matter : Goody *Cleck*, turning to the old Witch, I dare not take Charge of young Mistrefs without his Worship's Warrant, or that Farmer *Hodge* charge her with his own Mouth with Felony. Miss *Summers* took fresh Courage, believing that the honest Farmer would not join in their Plot whatever it was, for yet she had no Conception at what they would drive at ; and Goody *Moll*, and *Cleck*, looked as blank as you please for a Minute or two, gaping at one another as if they were bewitch. At last Goody *Moll* recovered her Surprize : What's the Matter, Master Constable, that you won't take Charge of the young Harlotry, what you a Man and a Constable of the Hundred, and he daunted at the Sight of such an impudent Baggage ? Does not see, Man, the stolen Goods about her, pointing to the Watch she had by her Side ? Look you there

there now, Neighbour *Ralph*, do you think such a Flirt as she came honestly by such a Thing; by my Faith and Troth its as good as 'Squire *Hopefon*'s Lady's, she had never a better by her Side, and you are such an Ass as not to lay hold on the Thief when the Villainy is plain before your Eyes. Take hold of her this Minute, I say, and carry her before his Worship, Mr. Justice *Rakeish*, of *Featherstone-Hall*, I'll warrant he ferks the Truth out of her, for all her sanctified Airs. Indeed Neighbour, replied the Constable, I shall take no Charge of my young Mistress, without you say she stole the Watch from you, or that Farmer *Hodge*, my good Neighbour, swears the Felony with hur own Mouth, hur was more Wit, than to meddle with Gentlefolks at that Rate; had she appeared a poor ragged Thief, I should have made no Bones of the Matter, but hur knows his Worship, Justice *Rakish* always takes the Part of Gentlefolks, especially handsome, proper Damsels as this seems to be, and might chance to trounce me for my Pains if I did any Thing against the Law.

The Farmer and his hopeful Son, who neither of 'em knew one Tittle of what was transacting at Home, happened to be but at a
small

small Distance, and within View of the House, when they chanced to spy a Crowd of the Neighbours in the Village, which the Appearance of the Constable had brought about the Door. He and *Richard* immediately run up to see what was the Matter, and was met in the Entry by one of the Dairy Maids. Oh, dear Master, what a Work is here! The fine Gentlewoman you brought Home with you last Week has stole something, and my Mistress and her Sister *Goody Cleck* have sent for the Constable, and are sending her to *Featherston-Hall*, to his Worship, Justice *Rakish*. My Heart bleeds for the poor young Creature; I'm sure and certain she is innocent, for all *Goody Cleck* makes such a woeful Do about her being a Thief.—God's Fish, says *Richard*, my fine Mistress a Thief? Tho' she won't have me, yet I mayn't see her wronged neither. Make haste Veather, and let us go up and see what is the Matter.

The Farmer was Thunder-struck with the News, and without knowing what he did, went up to the Room where the hellish Crew were assembled, without speaking a Word. Oh, here he comes, says the Constable, now let us hear what Neighbour
Hodge

Hodge says to this Affair, hur likes to speak to Men, and not to keep a Prible-prable with filly Women. Say, Neighbour *Hodge*, has the Damsel been guilty of Vellony? Answer upon your corporal Oath, yea or no. Upon my Word, replied *Hodge*, not yet recovered out of his Surprise, and looking amazed like a Dog in a Dancing School, I know nothing at all of all this Rout; I have lost nothing, and she may be guilty of Vellony or any thing else for ought I know. Look you there, Mr. Constable, replied the malicious *Cleck*, you see Brother *Hodge* says she may be guilty of Vellony for aught he knows. I hope you'll take Charge of the young Harlotry now. Hold Sister, returned the Farmer, a little come to his Wits again, tell me what the young Woman is charged with, for I tell you I have lost nothing that I know of, and I believe her to be as honest as my own Wife *Moll* there. Hold your impertinent Tongue, and not make Comparisons between me and a vile Thief. I tell you she stole that Watch and the fine Gewgaws hanging to it, and the Money, the twenty Guineas she gave you to keep; I say she did, let me hear your jolter Head contradict it, if you dare; don't you think I know what's what better than you; give her
in

in Charge this Minute to the Constable, or mayhap I may make the House too hot for you else. Oh, dear Veather, do give your Charge, added the mischievous *Gillian*, you little know what a Flirt she is, and how much Trouble you may come to for harbouring a Thief. Hold your ill-natured Clack, returned *Richard*, my Veather shall give no Charge, she has stole nothing from you, Mrs. Nimble Chops, you are nettled because young *George* has slighted you on her Account, and would be revenged would you? But I shall prevent that, this Bout, Efakins. The Women all opened at once upon poor *Richard*, in a confused Noise of Railing and Scolding, which nobody could understand. Silence in the Court, cries the Constable, you are all mad hur believes, what the Devil won't you let Neighbour *Hodge* speak for himself; do you or do you not give me this Woman in Charge as a Vellon? Yes he does, cries the Women all at once: No, no, cries *Richard*, and the Farmer, cow'd by his Wife's fierce Looks, durst not mutter a Word, tho' No was between his Teeth. Miss *Summers* would have spoke to him, but the old Women set up such a Hollow, she was obliged to be silent and wait patiently the Result of this mad Assembly, whom she

she saw bent upon Mischief, without either Rhime or Reason. Why don't you speak, you Dolt you? cries *Moll* to her Spouse, must we stand here all Day waiting on your Chops opening? Give your Orders like a Man, or I'll split your Dog's Head for you, at the same Time shaking her Fist at him, which the good Man knew to be a certain Signal of an approaching Storm, he therefore wisely chose to shun it, though at the Expence of the Innocent. Well Neighbour *Ralph*, since my Wife *Moll* says the young Woman has stole these Things, it must be so, tho' upon my Soul I know nothing of the Matter, yet for Peace-Sake, pray carry the young Woman before the Justice, and let him do with her what he pleases.

Yes, now since a Man speaks, I can safely do my Office, if it is wrong let you look to it; come Mistress, you must along with me to his Worship, Justice *Rakish*, at *Featherstone-Hall*, his Worship will dispatch you in a Twinkling of an Eye, he makes the best Dispatch at a Mittimus of any Justice in *England*.

To Mr. Justice *Rakish*, replied Miss *Summers* startled, pray is he not a young
 VOL. II. G Gentleman,

Gentleman, pretty tall, and of a black Complexion? Yes he is, replied the Constable. Oh, I find you are no Novice, I fancy you must be an old Offender, and has been thro' his Worship's Hands before now, if so, it's Time to be jogging; I have been afraid of my own Shadow, and might have been returned before now and at my Work, but that I thought I had to do with somebody better than ordinary; come, why don't you stir your Limbs, I shall get a Cart else. Hold, for Heaven's Sake, cryed the afflicted Fair, be not in such haste to do Mischief, and what you may dearly repent. Cannot you oblige me, since I must go before a Justice for a Crime I am innocent of, to carry me before some other, I have a particular Reason to refuse to go there; but God, who will protect my Innocence against the Malice of these Women, knows it is not Guilt; Oh! Mr. Constable, if you have the least Spark of good Nature in you, carry me any where else, but not there. No, no, cry'd the female Hell-hounds, don't mind her Neighbour *Ralph*, carry her to his Worship 'Squire *Rakish*, and none else; don't be bamboozled with her Crockadile Tears, you see her proud Stomach is come down, she knows his Worship you see, if she were innocent she would go where she is known to

to chuse, but she thinks to escape, if we carry her before 'Squire *Softhead*, because she fancies she can pelaver him over with a fine Tale of a Cock and a Bull, which I warrant she has at her Tongue's End : I am of your Mind Neighbour, replied the Constable, and to his Worship *Rakish* she shall go, and no where else.

To the unhappy Miss *Summers* it would at first seem indifferent before whom she was carried, since she knew the worst that could happen, besides being exposed, was to own who she was, and appeal to Lady *Bountiful* for a Character : But that she dreaded above all Things, as it would destroy her whole Scheme. And therefore so soon as she heard Justice *Rakish* mentioned, she recollected that she had seen him often, and had been entertained by him with some very impertinent country Gallantries, therefore, if she went before him, she was sure to be discovered, and her Plan ruined that Way ; and besides exposed to the Discretion of a young Fellow of the most abandoned libertine Principles, and who was remarkable for his licentious Behaviour to Women of all Ranks ; so that if she had come before him in this Equipage, she had every thing to fear ; whereas if she was

carried before a Stranger, she had a Chance, even if she discovered herself, to prevail on a Man of any Share of good Nature and Humanity to keep a Secret. It was this Thought which made her appear so anxious with the Constable to avoid Justice *Rakish*; but the more averse she seemed, the more they were determined to pursue that Step. She begg'd, pray'd, kneel'd and entreated the Brute with Language and Action that would have melted a Stone; but his own rugged Nature, case-hardened by the Malice of the female Fiends, rendered him obdurate to all her Entreaties. At last, when Words, Prayers nor Tears would not prevail,—What is it, cruel People you aim at, is it my Life? Kill me, pray at once, but don't enhance my Misery by exposing me in this Manner.—Is it what I have ye covet, which that misfed Man saved from less savage Robbers? Oh, take it all for God's Sake; leave me but this, unhooking from the Watch a miniature Picture in Enamel, of Lady *Bountiful* and Sir *Thomas*, when a Boy of ten Year's Old; and take all the rest, I'll give it you freely and bless you, pray for you while I live, if you but let me go; here take the Trifles and divide them amongst you, I can but beg my Way to some more hospitable Region.

The

The Constable, tho' deaf as an Adder to Tears, Prayers and Entreaties of Innocence and mourning Beauty, yet in this last Speech found something that moved his savage Passion, the Sight of the gold Watch lain on the Table, and the Thoughts of the Spoil in the Farmer's Hands, with the Words (divide them amongst you) touched his brutal Heart. Nay, what is still more wonderful, the Thoughts of Interest even wrought upon the malicious *Cleck*, and the revengful and mischievous *Gillian*; in a Moment this last cast her greedy Looks upon the Watch, and fancied it at her Side, and tossed her haughty Head as if already graced with that Ornament. In short this last Speech of the unhappy Sufferer, softened the Hearts and Countenances of the whole rugged Assembly. The Farmer leaped for Joy, but it was from a different Motive from all the rest. He hoped to be possessed of the Goods, and to get the young Woman out of the Clutches of the Women, and then to have restored them to her; for tho' this Peasant had the Honour, as well as many *British* Husbands of great Renown, to be under Petticoat-Government, yet he was naturally honest and generous, when not under the Influence of

termagant *Moll*, who herself would not have been quite so bad, if she had not been hag-rid by her Sister, who was a true Servant to the old Gentleman in black.

The Constable on hearing and pausing a little on this Offer of the Prisoner, softened his magisterial Countenance, and told Miss he would trust her by herself for a few Minutes, till he consulted with his Neighbours what might be done, but would make bold to carry with him the Watch. He took it up without waiting her Reply, he and his Poffy went out, and he locked the Door after him.

Miss, whose Spirits, it is easy to be imagined, was in the utmost Agitation during the Wrangle in her Presence, remained after they left the Room in a Kind of fearful Suspence ; she had seen such frequent and unexpected Changes in her State, that she durst not flatter herself with the small Prospect she had at present of being delivered, on very hard Terms, from the Hands of these ravenous Vultures. She was afraid of every thing, while her Fate was in suspense, and had nothing to support her from sinking under that Weight of Woe which oppressed her, but that constant Dependance on the Assistance of divine Providence, whose Good-

Goodness she had so often experienced. She took out of her Bosom, where she had placed it, when she unhooked it from her Watch, the miniature Picture of Lady *Bountiful*, and with a Heart ready to burst, How little does the dear Original of this Picture think to what Misfortunes I am exposed, even for the Sake of these Trifles her Bounty furnished me with ; how happy was I when under that dear Woman's Protection, and how happy might I have been still, had not this dear Youth's ill-directed Passion soured all my Peace. Yet I suffer this, and am ready to suffer much more to preserve the Peace of that noble Family, and to convince my Benefactress, that nothing this Side of Time is so dear to me as her Quiet. When bereft of all, I shall think myself happy, nay rich in Possession of this Picture : Sure I am, the Barbarians will not grudge me this ; but if they should, the Originals are too deeply engraven in my Heart, that I should need this to put me in Mind of them.

While Miss was in this melancholy Soliloquy, shivering between Hope and Fear, her Persecutors were got together by the Ears, and at high Words about the Division of the Spoil. The Constable, when he came out of the Room, harangued his Audience,

and advised them by all Means, to accept of the Prisoner's Offer, since if they carried her before a Magistrate, they had no Right to any thing she had, and that if she had actually stole them, somebody else would claim them and give them, but a Trifle for their Pains. It required no great Rhetorick to persuade any of them to fall in with his Advice, and the Farmer taking the Watch out of the Constable's Hands.—Well, Neighbour *Ralph*, we thank you for the Trouble you have been at, you may now leave the young Woman with me, I shall send her away immediately, and you may give out that we were all Mistaken, and that she proves a very honest Person; and here Neighbour, that you may not have all this Trouble for nothing, there is a Guinea for you; it's soon earned Neighbour, you would not have made so much by twenty Shillings by staying at Home. It may be not Farmer *Hodge*, replied the Constable, in a very surly Tone, but do you think to put me off with a lousy Guinea, and to keep all to yourself; no, no, hur knows a Trick worth two of that; you but joke Neighbour *Hodge*, you must not bam me so neither, let us have a fair Division, and much good may your Share do you. A fair Division *Ralph*, cries *Moll*, in a bloody Passion,

Passion, What Right have you to any thing but a Groat for serving a Warrant? I think *Hodge* there has been too free of his Money when he offered you a whole Guinea; Division, quoth a, let me see if he dares give you a Souce more; take that, or ye shall have ne'er a Farthing; what do you take us for Ideots to be at all this Pains with the young Woman to give Half to you, *Ralph*. No, no, you must put none of your sharpening Tricks upon us, come take your Guinea and march off with your long Staff, we have no more to do with you here. Sharpening Tricks, replied the enraged Officer of Peace, give us none of your Names, Neighbour *Moll*, you know I have had the Handling of you before now for your scolding Tongue, and mayhap may have it again; Goody, remember the Stocks in the Church-Yard, they are pure strong, and I keep the Key. Goody *Cleck*, goody *Moll*, and Termagant *Gillian*, all opened at once, like a Pack of deep mouth'd Hounds against the Constable, and were ready to pull his Eyes out; but he was Mettle enough for them all, and after returning them as many foul Names as they gave, told them, Well then, since I'm not to have my Share, d——n my bl——d if you touch a Shilling that belongs to her. You, Farmer *Ralph*,
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gave

gave the young Woman in charge to me as a Felon, I'll carry her before his Worship, hinder it who dares, and let him decide who has a Right to these Things, if I have not my Cut, you shall not ; I charge you all in the King's Name, to assist me to carry the Prisoner to his Worship's ; come Farmer, you must come along to make good your Charge. They would have been willing now to have compounded a little, but the Constable was in such a *Welch* Passion, that he was even deaf to his own Interest, ran up to the Chamber, and went rudely up to the unhappy Miss *Summers*, and seizing her by the Arm, come, come along Mistress before his Worship Justice *Rakish*, he must determine this Matter, come along I say, I can't dilly dally here all the Day.

The unfortunate Sufferer fell on her Knees, pressed the Barbarian's Hands, and begged of him in Terms that would have tamed an *African* Monster, not to carry her before that Gentleman ; but he remained obstinate, and had dragged her by downright Force almost to the Door of the Chamber, when young *George*, so often mentioned before, bounced into the Room, and seizing the Constable by the Collar, Unhand the Gentlewoman you Brute you, what

what Right have you to use her thus? Tell me this Instant, or I'll squeeze your Soul out. The Constable let go his Hold of Miss, and in a dreadful Panick, for his Courage lay in his Office, not in his Heart, begged of *George* to be patient, and he would tell him. *George* let go his Collar, and turning to Miss with a Politeness not common to Men of his Rank, handed her to a Chair, Compose yourself, Madam, I'll stand your Friend or lose my Life in the Attempt. Well, *Ralph*, what have you to say against this Gentlewoman? I have nothing, replied the Constable, but only Neighbour *Hodge* gave her me in Charge as a Felon, and I was carrying her before Mr. Justice *Rakish*, and the young Woman would rather go before any body else, that's all. I mun do my Duty, mayn't I Mr. *George*? I know you must, replied *George*, but I think the Sight of this much wrong'd young Creature should have hindered you from using her brutishly as you were doing when I came in, I know the Spite Neighbour *Hodge* and his Family have at her, I have heard it all but this Minute, (he had been acquainted with the whole Proceedings since the Arrival of the Constable by the Boy I spoke of who delivered his Letter) and somebody shall smoak for it unless they

give up what they have of her's, and let her freely quit the House this Minute. No, that she shall not, cried the enraged Women, for all your huffing. How can you suffer such a Rascal to affront you in your own House, Husband? Turn him out by the Ears this Minute, if you are a Man. The Farmer in his Heart approved *George's* Proceeding, and besides was not over and above courageous at any Time, and therefore could not be wrought upon so much as to pretend to be angry, notwithstanding all the Women could say to provoke him; but *Richard*, who looked upon him as a Rival, was easier moved, and began to mutter somewhat between his Teeth, which young *George* crammed down his Throat with a sound Douce in the Chops with his double Fist, which silenced him, but set the Women a squalling and scolding more than ever. *George* turning to *Mills*, who sat all this Time in a Kind of Reverie, unable to form any Judgment of what was like to become of her. Come, Madam, I see there is no Way of serving you but by appealing to a Magistrate, who will do Justice to your Innocence; we shall go before 'Squire *Worthy*, he is a grave Man and a Man of Honour, I warrant you he trounces the Rogues, let me see the Constable

ble refuse to go there if he dares ; and that we may not want Company, I charge you, *Ralph*, with Farmer *Hodge* and these Women, for a Design to rob and defraud this Gentlewoman of Goods and Money to a great Value.

Miss *Summers*, at the first Part of his Speech, which related to her going before Justice *Worthy*, was overjoyed, as she began to conceive by his Character some rational Hope of being relieved, but when he mentioned charging the Farmer and his Family, she started back and cried, God forbid, Sir, that you should put them to any Trouble ; if they have meant me Harm lately I forgive them, but as the Farmer saved me from the Ruffians, I shall never return that Benefit with so much Ingratitude as to do him any Injury ; therefore, let me conjure you, Sir, to let the Farmer go or stay, just as he pleases. You are strangely generous, replied *George*, but you must excuse me if I cannot comply so far at present, you may say what you will when you come before the Justice, and then may prosecute him or not, but I think it necessary for your Safety that we act as we do at present. Miss made some further Remonstrances in the Farmer's Behalf ; but *George*, who

who had a Spice of the Stubborn, as well as the Revengeful in his Temper, was obstinate, and stuck to his Charge, so that the whole Family attended Miss as Prisoners, to Mr. *Worthy's* House, which was about a short Mile from the Farmer's. But his Worship's Butler had just struck three great Knocks against the Pantry Door when the Company entered, and they were obliged to wait till after Dinner, before they could have Audience, and as the Word Dinner puts me in Mind that my Reader and I may be disposed for a Slice of something we cannot get at his Worship's, I shall put an End to the Chapter that we may be furnish'd elsewhere.

CH A P. IX.

Containing Miss Summers's Behaviour before the Justice, and her Release from this Persecution.

MISS *Summers*, her Prosecutors and Protector, were ushered into a Parlour to wait 'till the Justice had finished Dinner, which, as I observed, was just served up as they entered.

The Porter who let them in, notwithstanding the Grief which was visible in her
Coun-

Countenance, was amazed to see one of her Appearance come there as charged with Felony. He reported her Beauty, &c. to the rest of the Servants, who all of them one by one came into the Room to have a Peep at her, and went away highly prejudiced in her Favour. The News of so extraordinary a Prisoner was carried in to his Worship and his Lady, and so favourable a Report made of her Appearance, that the Justice and all his Family made a very hasty Meal, that they might gratify their Curiosity, that was so highly raised by the Account of the Servants who waited at Table; even the Chaplain dispensed with two Glasses, and shortened his Grace, that with the rest he might have a View of the lovely Prisoner.

As Mr. *Worthy* was told young Farmer *George* came along with her, he called him in when the Cloth was taken away, to learn something of the Matter beforehand. That young Man gave a very favourable Account of the fair Prisoner, related the Manner the Farmer had met with her, their Design of forcing her to marry their Son *Dick*, and this Plot about the Constable to have cheated her of all she had, if they could have agreed about the Division of their Booty.

This

This Account which was given of the Prisoner by young *George*, in the Presence of Mrs. *Worthy*, very much attached that good-natured Lady to Miss *Summers's* Interest, and made the Justice himself, who was a Man of strict Probity and great Humanity, impatient to do her all the Justice in his Power, and violently bent on punishing the base Attempt of the Farmer and the Constable, as their Malice deserved.

The Parties were called in, and if the Justice and his Family, who all staid to hear the Issue of so uncommon a Trial, were prepossessed in the Favour of the unfortunate Fair, her Appearance and noble but modest Deportment, even before she uttered a Word in her own Defence, begat in them all, not only Sympathy and Compassion, which Savages would have afforded to so much Beauty in Distress, but the warmest Friendship and Affection.

The Constable had hold of her Hand when she entered the Room, but she had no sooner dropped a Courtesy with one of those expressive Looks, which bespeak a Person truly well bred, than Mrs. *Worthy* rose from her Seat, took her by the Hand and placed her in a Chair next herself, saying at the same Time,

Time, Madam, I am heartily sorry to see a Person of your Mien and Aspect on so odd an Occasion ; but take Courage, Madam, that Innocence which I can read in your Face, must always find Friends, except amongst Barbarians. I'm sure Mr. *Worthy* will do you justice, and you need be under no Manner of Apprehension. I'm glad, Madam, replied the lovely Prisoner, that Fortune in the lowest Ebb of my Distress has placed me in such Hands, where I doubt not but I shall meet with Humanity and Compassion ; I trust in Providence, who knows my Innocence, that nothing will appear against me, to oblige you, Madam, to repent the good Nature with which you are pleased to treat the most unfortunate of her Sex.

The Goodys *Cleck* and *Moll*, the surly *Gillian*, the Farmer and the Constable, looked extremely sheepish when they heard and saw the Respect with which Mrs. *Worthy* treated the unhappy Prisoner, and young *George* was ready to leap out of his Skin for Joy, his Eyes sparkled with malicious Pleasure to see the Confusion of the Farmer and his Family, and he could not help asking Mrs. *Gillian*, in a jeering Whisper, who stood as mute as a Fish to hear him, Pray when shall I have the Pleasure of seeing you
with

with the Gold Watch by your Side? I suppose that must fall to your Share by and by.

The Justice, who had all this while his Eyes intent upon Miss, and amazed at the Barbarity of the villainous Crew, that could find in their Hearts to commit so much Violence on a Person of her innocent Appearance, would willingly have given Vent to the Indignation with which the Sight of her Prosecutors filled him, and have treated them, without any other Evidence, as the most abandoned Criminals; but recollecting his Office as a Magistrate, he smoothed the Frown that had already gathered on his Brow, and with as much Calmness as he could affect, asked the Constable what he had to lay to the Charge of this young Gentlewoman.

The Manner in which the Justice spoke, gave the Constable and his Party some Courage, for they had been accustomed by the Justices before whom they ordinarily went, to gather the Success of their Cause by the Degree of Warmth in the Voice, and the Number of Wrinkles in the Justice's Brow, and fancied that as Mr. *Worthy* did not salute them with Rogue and Rascal, they had some Chance of carrying their Point,
not-

notwithstanding the Favour shewn the Prisoner by the female Side of the Magistrate.

If it please your Worship, replied the Constable, Farmer *Hodge* here tells me he met with this young Woman about two Hours turned of Midnight, in a Lane a little more than five Miles from *Cowan Gathbury*, tied to a Tree by some Ruffians, who, as she told him, had robb'd her, and fallen out amongst themselves about lying with her; the Farmer unbound her and returned her Things which the Rogues had left behind them in their Hurry to get off when he and his Man came up; and that he, believing her to be an honest Person in Distress, carried her home with him to his own House till she was recovered from the Fright; but on seeing she had a Gold Watch, some Money, and a great many Things that belongs only to Gentlefolks, and that she said she was only a young Woman going for *London* to Service, made him suspect that she was some runaway Lady's Woman, and stole these Things from her Mistress, and therefore he charged her with Felony, and order'd me to carry her before Justice *Rakish*; but the young Woman it seems knows his Worship, and was not willing to go there, which
looks

looks very suspicious, and young *George*, who I believe is her Sweetheart, forced me to bring her before your Worship. Have you, resumed the Justice, Farmer *Hodge* any thing to say more than what the Constable has told? and what Reason have you to suspect that the Things you speak of are stolen? Indeed, replied the Farmer, I don't know whether they are or not, but my Wife *Moll* there and her Sister *Cleck* says they are, and made me, against my Will, charge the young Woman, who I believe is as innocent as the Child unborn; but your Worship knows a Man must do a great deal for Peace, so it be to humour one's own Wife. *Moll* gave him a Look that spoiled his Speech, and added herself, indeed please your Worship, I am sure she is no better than she should be, or she had not been out of a Christian House at the Time of Night *Hodge* met her, and then she has been ever since so fearful of being seen by any body; if but a Horse went past the Door, or the Dog barked, ever since she came to us, she would be in such a fearful Fright, grow pale, and tremble, so as if she were going to be hanged; I am sure honest Folks are not so fearful. Ay, added malicious *Cleck*, and when we spoke of carrying her before Justice *Rakish*, whom she knows, (I
warrant

warrant for no Good, an't please your Worship) she was in such a Fright, cried and sobbed as if she had been ready to burst, and begged and prayed not to go, and when the Constable there was resolute, she offered all she had, except a little Picture she has got in her Bosom there, to get free, but that confirmed our Suspicion, and made us reject the Offer. Yes, you old—Witch, young *George* would have said, but that he caught himself in Time, you rejected it because the Constable there would go Halves with you in the Booty ; if you could have agreed, we should not have had the Trouble to come here, but you and your Husband would have got what you saved from the Highwaymen.

The Justice saw well enough that Malice and Avarice were the chief Motives of the Prosecutors, yet he thought there seemed a Mystery at the Bottom of the Whole which he could not comprehend, and that there were so much Grounds for their ill-natur'd Suspicion as left him no Room as a Magistrate to dismiss the Prisoner, without giving a very good Account of herself ; tho' if he had followed the Dictates of his Heart as a private Person, he would have acquitted her without any further Enquiry. He
turned

turned about to her, and with as much Affability in his Countenance as possible, that he might not intimidate her, told her, Madam, you hear their Charge, and the Grounds of their Suspicion, I'm persuaded you can satisfy us that the Goods in Question are your own, by relating who you are, and by what Accident you come to be alone at such a Time of Night, and what could induce you rather to part with Things of such Value than go before a Magistrate, who, as they say, is known to you, who would at once have silenced this Clamour, and saved you from the Malice of these ignorant People. I'm inclinable to believe you innocent, but my Duty as a Magistrate obliges me to require some Explanation that may justify my dismissing a Charge of this Nature.

Miss was pleased with the delicate Manner in which the Justice hinted his Suspicions, but however softly they were intended, her Pride could not brook being thought a Thief, especially by People of Rank, whose Opinion of her she valued; the Thoughts of it oppressed her Spirits, and she could not help bursting into Tears. Good God! when shall Fortune cease to persecute me? How hard is it that Actions founded on the strictest Rules of Virtue, and enforced

enforced by dire Necessity, should alone impeach my Innocence, and charge me with a Crime unknown to any of my Blood, and which my Soul abhors !

Her Tears would not let her proceed, and she was ready to faint with the Agony she was in of being obliged to discover herself. especially before so many, and such low Company. Mr. *Worthy* saw her Embarrassment, which his good Nature, and the Prepossession he had conceived in her Favour, made him interpret to her Advantage ; he was melted into the greatest Compassion, and wished that he had not been enforced to put her to so much Pain ; and the amiable Mrs. *Worthy* was so moved, that she insensibly accompanied her Tears, without knowing the Motives the lovely Mourner had for being so much overwhelmed with Sorrow ; however, she had happily the Presence of Mind to relieve her from a great Part of the Embarrassment. I guess, said she, Mr. *Worthy*, that there is some Mystery in the Case of this unhappy young Creature, her Sorrow does not seem the Effect of conscious Guilt, but that of Innocence oppressed, and a Mind labouring with some Secret it may not be proper to discover before such Company ; let me intreat
you

you to order those People to withdraw, and perhaps you may be satisfied that their base Suspicions are ill grounded.

Mr. *Wortby* improved the Hint, and ordered every body out of the Room, except his Lady, whose Presence he thought would encourage the fair Prisoner to open her Case with greater Freedom ; but before the Constable and Farmer went out, he ordered them to leave the Things they had taken from Miss, and on looking at the Watch he asked where the Picture was they spoke of. The young Gentlewoman has it in her Bosom, says *Hodge*, she can give it to your Honour, if there is not some Name to it that may inform you of the right Owner. Miss pulled it out, and gave it Mr. *Wortby*, with a Look of Contempt at the malicious Constable, who immediately left the Room.

When they were all gone, Mr. *Wortby* addressed himself to Miss, who had resumed a greater Composure in her Looks, and Behaviour. Your Appearance, Madam, has prepossessed me with the Belief that the Whole of this Affair is the Height of Malice and Villainy. I assure you I am willing to serve you all in my Power, and beg you may enable me to do it by letting me into
so

so much of your Affair as may silence the Clamour. You may depend upon it no Use shall be made of what you impart, but to serve yourself, and that if it requires it, an inviolable Secrecy shall be observed. Miss was about to reply to this obliging Behaviour of the worthy Magistrate, when Mrs. *Wortby* who had been, while he was speaking, examining the Picture with great Attention, in a kind of Transport, said, I guess, Mr. *Wortby*, I have discovered the Secret; I knew I was right, my Mind was fully assured at first Sight, that this young Lady deserved the highest Esteem. Miss blush'd at the Compliment, as she thought that her Secret was known. Don't be concerned, Madam, that we have found out what you were willing to conceal, I think it almost a happy Accident, that has brought me to the Acquaintance of a young Lady I have heard so much admired and commended by the good Lady *Bountiful*, whose Picture I know this to be, and from thence judge you are the Miss *Summers* for whom that worthy Family has been for this Week past in so much Concern. I am sure it will be joyful News to that good Lady that you are found. Oh! for Heaven's Sake, Madam, replied Miss *Summers*, since I do not deny but that you have hit upon my

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Story, yet I beseech you, by all the Ties of Humanity, to conceal your Knowledge of me from that Family; my Peace, my Happiness, my Reputation, and what is dearer to me than all these put together, the Quiet of that dear Lady my most generous Preserver depends on my concealing myself, which was the only Reason that has brought me into so many Misfortunes, and to avoid such a Discovery I refused going before Mr. *Rakeish* who must have known me at first Sight, and I knew him too well either to give him such Advantage over me, or trust him with a Secret of such Importance, which I was sure he would divulge. But I hope better from your Hands, Sir, and that I shall be able to convince you that I don't act out of Caprice, and that the Resolution I have taken to conceal myself from that much lov'd Family, to whom I owe more than Life, is the only Part I can act consistent with Gratitude, Duty and Virtue.

As to that, Madam, replied Mr. *Worthy*, tho' I cannot at present dive into the Reasons that induce you to that Conduct, yet I have so good an Opinion of your Sense, both from the Character I have had of you, and from what I have seen on this Occasion, that

that I flatter myself you will find it no difficult Matter to bring me and my Wife to any Measures you may think for your Good. In the mean time I hope you will favour me with your Company for a few Days till you can resolve deliberately on what is proper for you to do. I shall now take Measures to do you Justice on your Persecutors according to the Measure of Malice they have discovered in this Affair; for I think their Attempt to rob you under Colour of Justice of what justly belonged to you, deserves severe Punishment. Alas, replied the now much comforted Fair, let me entreat you to think no more of them, but leave them to the Punishment of their own Consciences. I owe so much to the honest Farmer, who I am sure acted in this Affair against his Inclination, under the Influence of his Wife and Sister, for the Succour he afforded me in my utmost Distress, that if he had done me much more Mischief I should never forgive myself if he suffered any thing on my Account; consider, Sir, that if any Notice is taken of them it must make my Affair more publick, and subject me to the malicious Sneers of an ignorant Mob; I beg of you then, Sir, to dismiss them, for indeed I believe what they did was more out of Ignorance than Malice.

Mr. *Worthy* and his Lady were charmed with the generous forgiving Temper of their fair Guest, so different from that Spirit of Revenge so grateful to little Minds in the fair Sex, and tho' they both resented the Indignity offered her with great Zeal and Warmth, yet they chose to give her the Pleasure of yielding to her Entreaties on the Behalf of the worthless Prosecutors. The Parties were called in, and Mr. *Worthy* gave them a severe Reprimand, and intimated to them, that if it were not to gratify the transcendent Goodness of the young Lady that had been so maliciously injured, he would have made them Examples to deter others from prostituting Justice to serve the villainous Purposes of Malice and Avarice, and then dismissed them; but as for young *George*, he thanked him for the Zeal he had shewn in her behalf, tho', added he, *George*, you too, tho' ignorantly, offered her an Affront, when you durst mention Love to one of her Rank, but I hope now that I inform you of the Respect due to her, you will ask her Pardon for that Offence. *George* look'd a little foolish, and was hammering out a Compliment, but Miss interrupting him, told him he needed not be anxious about what had passed, that she

she should always esteem him as one who had done her a very signal Service in procuring her being brought before that worthy Gentleman, and I hope, added she, I shall have it in my Power to reward it. *George* made a low Bow, and seemed pleased that he had done good to one who so much deserved it, and was not a little vain of the Applause bestowed on him by Mr. and Mrs. *Worthy*, and the whole Family, who kept Holiday for Joy of the young Lady's Delivery, and hooted the Constable and his Party out of Doors like so many Pick-pockets; and if it had not been for Mr. *Worthy's* Steward, who was accidentally riding by, as they passed the Stables, the Servants and a great many of the Neighbours who followed them, had certainly ducked the Women in the Horse-pond; but as he had not been at home, and consequently ignorant of the Cause of their Quarrel, he saved them from a Discipline they richly deserved, and which he would not have grudged them, had he known the Height of their Malice to the innocent Miss *Summers*.



THE
HISTORY
OF A
PARISH GIRL.

BOOK IV.

Containing some more of the disastrous Part of Miss *Summers's* History, but concluding with Part of that Happiness, which I'm sure every virtuous and good-natur'd Reader thinks she deserves, and wishes her to enjoy.

CHAP. I.

Containing the Author's last Address to his Readers.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I Have left the charming Miss *Summers* in close Chat with the discreet Mrs. *Worthy*, who is hearing with great Attention the fair Unfortunate's Story, and commending

mending the virtuous Motive of her Resolution, but endeavouring to persuade her to return to Lady *Bountiful's* House, who are all in Confusion for her Absence. As that Argument may last for two or three Days, for aught I know, I thought best to leave them to settle the important Point between them, since it would be enough for me to know the Result of their friendly Debate, and that I could not spend my Time better than in a little *tête à tête* Conversation with my Readers, which may be the last Time I shall have an Opportunity ; for as my Favourite Miss *Summers* is pretty well grown up, it is Time to provide her with a Husband, and as my other Heroine the Lady *Bountiful* is grown pretty old and stands much in my Way, it is full Time to think of sending her to her Grave, at least I am sure Sir *Thomas* thinks so, and you know all these Things are Matters of great Moment, and require a good deal of necessary Preparation : For old as she is, I cannot knock the good Lady on the Head without some little Ceremony, nor can I marry the Girl to the first Man I meet ; besides she has still a little of the Woman in her, she is somewhat self-will'd, and the Baronet runs so much in her Head, that I shall have much ado to persuade her to give her Hand at all

to another; therefore, as I have so much to do, I must be excused giving any more private Audience to my Readers, but hasten to prepare and invite them to the Wedding of my pretty Parish Girl; but I must in this place, make a Party amongst the Fair to save the Author of the Parish Girl, from the merciless Persecution of the numerous Tribe of Criticks, who may find Materials sufficient in this Work to employ their malicious Talents of finding Fault. I have already disclaimed their Jurisdiction, which I know must inhance their Spleen, and perhaps put it into their Heads to press me to Death according to the antiquated Practice of the Common Law, for not holding up my Hand at the Bar and pleading Guilty, or not Guilty; but if I have the Fair Sex of *Great Britain* on my Side, against whom I hope I have not offended in any unpardonable Degree, I shall suffer the *Pien forè Dure* with Heroic Constancy, and laugh at the pointless Malice of my dull Persecutors.

My sole Intention in these Sheets has been to recommend Gratitude, Sincerity, and Constancy with a rational Dependance on the Divine Protection, as well as a religious Resignation to his Will, in the
highest

highest Distress of human Life; and in the Incidents I have made use of to inculcate these Virtues on the Mind of my Readers, I have supposed nothing, but what, not only may happen in common Life, but what to my own Knowledge has happened more than once, for I may here take the Liberty to assure the Publick, That the Character of Lady *Bountiful* and Miss *Summers* owe scarce any thing to Invention, except Names of Persons and Places, and such other Embellishments, as I thought, might render the Narrative more entertaining, and were necessary to adjust it to the manner of Writing I had pitched upon as my Plan.

I don't know whether the Virtues by which I have endeavoured to distinguish the Character of Miss *Summers* are such as may recommend her to a Place in the Drawing-room. — Perhaps her Sincerity, may be reckoned unpolite, her Gratitude for Benefits received unfashionable in that Air, where Want of Memory in Matters of that Kind is looked upon as a necessary Accomplishment amongst the Great; her Constancy in Distress may be satyrical to the delicate *Petit Maitres*, who would faint under half the Fatigue she underwent

in Defence of her Virtue, and her Dependance on, and Acknowledgment of the Superintendance of a supreme Being, may be esteemed as an unfashionable Enthusiasm unbecoming the Freedom of the Age, who are ashamed of nothing so much as of owning themselves actuated by the Dictates of Religion and Piety ; I say, all this may be objected to her at certain polite Corner of this Metropolis, and the Inhabitants there may be ashamed to converse with my pretty Parish Girl in Publick, but I hope by far the greater Part of the Female Inhabitants of *London* and *Westminster* will vouchsafe her an Affylum in their Closet, and spend an Hour with Virtue and Innocence, when they can spare it from the important Affairs of Vice and Folly, and are at Liberty, without Danger of being laughed at by fashionable Fools, to indulge the Sentiments of Religion and Humanity, which this little History is designed to advance.

C H A P.

C H A P. II.

Containing Miss Summers's Transactions during her Stay at Mr. Worthy's, her narrow Escape from Sir Thomas, and her setting out for London.

IN two or three Days after Miss Summers's Delivery from the Persecution of the Farmer and his Family, when I thought she had rested herself sufficiently, and that she and Mrs. *Worthy* had finished that Part of their Conversation which my Readers and I might guess at without Conjururation, I thought proper to take a Walk down to Mr. *Worthy's*, put on my conjuring invisible Cap, and pop'd in upon the Ladies without their once dreaming that any thing Male was within a hundred Yards of them. What would Sir *Thomas Bountiful* have given to have been in my Place, what would not Mr. *Crofts* have suffered to have seen her as I did, or indeed what would not any young Fellow of Spirit, not quite debilitated with Age or Diseases, have given to have seen one of the finest Women in *England* in the Bloom of Eighteen, with all her Charms heighten'd with conscious Innocence,

cence, and her Cheeks glowing with the sincere Approbation of her own Conscience, and what is next to that, the unfeigned Praises of a Female Friend, whose Sincerity sanctified her Words, and whose solid Judgment justified being pleased with her Approbation. I gazed and admired her, as I think I never saw her so lovely as at that Instant; and yet the Pleasure I took in beholding her in a very bewitching Attitude, for she had just laced her Stays, her snowy Bosom all bare, and was preparing the Remainder of her Dress, little suspecting who was so near her; yet notwithstanding, I say, all this Advantage, the Pleasure I took in viewing her had nothing tumultuous in it, nothing sensual, nor the least Connection with her Sex; but it was such, as Virtue alone can inspire in the most brutish; something, I suppose, like that Emotion we must feel, when freed from this clog of Sin and Sense, and shall meet on our first Entrance into Eternity, with some of the immaterial Inhabitants of the Regions of peaceful Bliss.

Mrs. *Worthy* and she, were just in the Close of a Conversation wherein Miss *Summers* had with great Strength of Reason and Delicacy of Sentiment, convinced her
Friend

Friend that it was her Interest not to venture to return to Lady *Bountiful's* Family, or give them any notice where she should be, until Time had reduced Sir *Thomas* to Reason, and helped him to forget a Passion which that young Creature herself allow'd was neither for his Honour or Interest, according to the Notions that at this time prevail in the polite World; and Mrs. *Worthy*, charmed with her exalted and disinterested Virtue, had been bestowing on her all those Praises due to her matchless Worth, and lamenting that a Virtue so refined should meet with so many Misfortunes as that unhappy young Lady had lately underwent, and the Ways of Providence, added Mrs. *Worthy*, just as I had taken my invisible Station, are difficult if not impossible to trace; it may seem strange to our limited Understandings, that Persons in the Pursuit of strict Virtue and Innocence should meet with so many and so great Calamities, while perhaps others in Chace of Vice and Folly are followed by an uninterrupted Series of Prosperity and worldly Happiness; but if we call in Religion to our aid, and fortify our staggering Reason with just Notions of that Being who superintends all our Actions, we may rest satisfied, that every thing
that

that happens to us, however adverse it may seem for the present, yet in the end must turn out more to our Advantage than the most alluring Smiles of prosperous Fortune; nor should we, my dear Miss, neglect on such Occasions to examine ourselves strictly how far we have contributed to bring ourselves into the Disasters we complain of, in order to rectify our Conduct for the future, for we are not to expect that Providence is to work daily Miracles to save us from those Mishaps our own Imprudence or Inattention has brought upon us. We are endued with Reason and Judgment to guide us through the common Occurrences of Life, and if we fail in the proper Use, we must not blame Providence if the Event does not answer our Expectation. The Motives, my dear Miss, which induced you to leave *Lady Bountiful* are certainly just and noble, and can be only the Result of steady Virtue; but forgive me if I put you in mind, that you undertook it rather too rashly, without consulting the Dangers you plung'd yourself into, or taking the proper Measures to prevent those Misfortunes that might be expected in such an Adventure. If you had open'd your Mind to some Person of Experience, tho' they might have approv'd of
your

your Departure, yet they would have help'd your Escape in a manner that might have prevented these Disasters, out of which you have been reliev'd almost by a Miracle ; and no doubt, if we suppose a particular or special Providence in the Case, it would have been as easy for that unerring Power to have directed your Steps to your Journey's End without permitting you to fall into the Hands of the Ruffians, as to have saved you from their Violence after they met you ; but, by this Order of Things, you have been taught this Lesson, not to depend too much on your own Judgment for the future, and the Necessity of your Dependence on divine Providence is strongly enforced, which may be of great Use to you thro' the remaining Part of your Life, and you may profit more by it, by making this Use of it, than if you had got safe to *London* without any cross Accident.

Miss *Summers* listen'd with great Attention to the friendly Lesson, and told her Friend, that in all that had befallen her, she saw not only a special Providence, but could now plainly discover her own Imprudence and Want of Conduct, which she would endeavour to rectify for the time to come,

come, by praying for the divine Assistance, and trusting to her Discretion whose Advice might be of use to her unexperienced Years, and which she had reason from the humane Treatment she had already shewn her, to expect that she would be so good as to afford her. That, my dear *Charlotte*, is the Point I am at, I only would prevail on you, to put some Share of Confidence in me, that I might have it in my Power to serve you; for I was afraid, the fear of your being discovered might induce you to make a secret to me of your future Intentions, which made me urge the Imprudence of relying entirely on your own Judgment. You have now determined on never returning to Lady *Bountiful*, its necessary for you to resolve on some Method to carry you thro' the World free from those Dangers to which your Youth and Form expose you; they are many, my dear Creature, and I am anxious to know how you design to dispose of yourself. You have refused staying with me, where nothing should be wanting in my Power to make you easy, I wish your Reasons for leaving me were less urgent, for I assure you nothing would give me more real Pleasure than to have you always near me; but be assured, wherever

wherever you are, your Happiness shall be dear to me.

Miss return'd, to these affectionate Assurances of Mrs. *Worthy's*, an Answer full of Gratitude, and added, That she thought the most proper Method to dispose of herself, would be to endeavour when she got to *London*, to get into the Service of some Lady of Character, where she might have an Opportunity of living retired from the World, and forgetting that ever she had any Prospect of being more happy; for, continued she, tho' perhaps I might by my Needle, make a shift to earn a Subsistence, yet in that State I should be entirely left to my own Direction, which I know is not sufficient to protect me from the Snares and Temptations of the World; whereas in reputable Service, my Station will save me from many, and the Advice and Protection of a Mistress enable me to withstand the rest.

It grieves me, return'd Mrs. *Worthy*, to think that a young Creature of your Sense and Merit, should be oblig'd to serve; but I cannot help preferring that to a precarious Dependance on your Needle; a false Pride and a Love of Independance, as
they

they think it, induces a great many young Women to prefer that Way of Life to the most reputable Service; but the many and innumerable Miscarriages of such infatuated young Creatures ought to deter others from following their Example, and I'm rejoiced that you think in this so justly, as indeed you do in every thing far beyond your Years. Oh Lady *Bountiful*, how I envy your Happiness, how exquisite must be your Pleasure, when you reflect, that you have been instrumental in forming a Mind with such exalted Notions of Virtue and Honour? It shall be my care, Miss *Summers*, to think of a Family where I can place you, and where you shall be treated in some Measure worthy of your Merit, but I give you my Word, I shall discover no more of your Secret on that Occasion, than what you shall approve of. Then pausing a little, Bless me, continued she, how lucky is it that I just now thought of it; I have just recollected that Mrs. *Davis* of———wants a Companion; about three Weeks ago she wrote me, that Mrs. *Brown* who had been with her in that Station for these twelve Years, was on the point of being married; if she is not already supplied, she will prove, if possible, another Lady *Bountiful* to you; she is an old
Lady

Lady of as many amiable Qualities as any under the Sun, and has no Children, and lives very retired, one half of the Year in Town, and the other half in *Yorkshire*; if you approve of it, I shall write to her this very Post; if I can, my dear *Charlotte*, place you in that Lady's Family, all my Fears about you are vanished.

The Character Mrs. *Worthy* gave of Mrs. *Davis* was such, as left Miss *Summers* no room to hesitate in giving her Consent that the Lady should write to her Friend, and the Thought that she was in a probable Way of being settled free from all Temptations, gave a Chearfulness to her Countenance, that convinced Mrs. *Worthy*, that she could not do her fair Guest a more acceptable Office than to hasten a Project which gave her so much Pleasure in Expectation.

Mrs. *Worthy* wrote that same Night to Mrs. *Davis*, and had a Return in four or five Days, “ That Mrs. *Brown* was still
“ with her, and would continue for about
“ a Month or six Weeks, but at that time,
“ she would be glad to receive any Person
“ recommended by so dear a Friend as
“ Mrs. *Worthy*.

That

That Lady no sooner received this Letter then she ran with open Arms to Miss *Summers*, and embracing her with great Affection, Its done, my dear Miss, I have Mrs. *Davis's* Promise, which I know is sacred ; there is the Letter, you may read it ; there is nothing in it but friendly Compliments, and what concerns you ; and as for the little Delay, I am doubly pleased with that, because I have now insur'd six Weeks of your Company whether you will or not. Miss *Summers* returned her Carresses in a manner that shewed the Sense she had of the Service done her, and seem'd, nay, I'm sure, was really better pleas'd, and felt more rational Joy, on being assur'd of the Place, tho' a Place of Servitude, than another probably could be on hearing that they were to be one of the Maids of Honour to a Queen, or the most lucrative and honourable Place at Court : How amiable must Virtue be ! when it can render a Transition from the fairest Prospect of Wealth and Grandeur, to the lowest Condition in Life, not only tolerable, but Matter of the highest Pleasure ! and that to a Female Mind too, where Equipage, Place and Precedence, and the other noisy Appurtenances of Wealth and Grandeur are,

are, generally speaking, too deeply rooted to admit of any Pleasure that interferes with them.

Notwithstanding that Mrs. *Worthy* and her Family did all in their Power to render the Time Miss was obliged to stay in the Family as agreeable as possible, yet, the Fear she was daily under of being known by some of the Gentlemen of the County, or their Servants who came to visit Mr. *Worthy*, lowered a great deal of that Satisfaction she would otherwise have taken in their Conversation. She still retained the feigned Name of Miss *Sally Dickens*, and her real Secret was known only to Mr. and Mrs. *Worthy*, yet the Affair at the Farmer's, and the Manner of her coming to the Acquaintance of that Family was so publick in the Neighbourhood, that a great many came out of mere Curiosity to see her, and gave her great Uneasiness lest they should find any Resemblance between her Story and that of Miss *Summers*, which was now known all over the County. It chanced that for the first three Weeks her Fears proved vain, but then an Accident happened which convinced her that her Apprehensions were not without some reasonable Foundation, and obliged her to alter in some

Mea-

Measure, the Scheme she and Mrs. *Worthy* had projected.

Mr. *Worthy* about this Time went to the Assizes held for the County of *Caermarthen*, where at a public Table with the Judges and most of the Gentlemen of that County, amongst whom was Sir *Thomas Bountiful*, a Neighbour of Mr. *Worthy's* asked him publickly how his beautiful Guest was, and spoke of her in such high Terms, that it raised the Curiosity of some present to ask who that Beauty was, on whom he was so lavish of his Praises, and of whom they had not heard. Mr. *Worthy*, knowing the Consequence of such Discourse, turned the Conversation, but the rest of the Gentlemen, in a Vein of Raillery resumed the Subject in despite of him; and the Gentleman who first mentioned her, not imagining Mr. *Worthy* had any Reason for making a Secret of what was so publickly transacted, related to the Company the whole History of the supposed Miss *Sally Dickens*, with every Particular relating to her Escape from the Russians in the Lane, and was very facetious on the Plot the Farmer had formed of marrying her to his Son. The Company was pleased with the little Narrative, said it would make a good Subject for a Novel,

Novel, but began to enquire amongst themselves to what Family of the *Dickens* this celebrated Beauty belonged, for there were two or three of some Note in that and the adjacent County.

Sir *Thomas Bountifal*, from the first Mention of the Lady, found a Fluttering about his Heart he could not account for, and listened to her Story with great Attention, and at all the Turns of the Narrative seemed deeply affected with the Lady's Distress; when it was ended, he fell into a deep Study, out of which he started all of a sudden, in a mighty Flurry. Pray, Mr. *Worthy*, says he, can you recollect the Night the Farmer said he met this young Lady? I do not, says Mr. *Worthy*, in a most visible Confusion, observing that Sir *Thomas* had taken the Hint, but I believe it might be some Day last Month, putting it back farther than the Time he knew Miss *Summers* made her Escape. I wish, replied Sir *Thomas* with great Emotion, that you could be certain as to the Time. The Time, replied the Gentleman who spoke first, interrupting Mr. *Worthy*, before he had time to answer, I can tell you to a Minute, it was the Night after the Fair of *Old Radnor*; for the Farmer was returning from thence, where he
had

had been to sell some Cattle, and that Fair you know was on *Tuesday* the third of last Month. Before God, returned Sir *Thomas*, in great Agitation, with all the Marks of extreme Joy in his Countenance, it answers to a Minute, and I'll lay my Life the Miss *Dickens* you have been speaking of is no other than the charming Miss *Summers*; it can be none else, no body but she deserves the Praise you have bestowed on Miss *Dickens*; none could behave, in such Circumstances, in the Manner you have related, but the lovely Miss *Summers*. The whole Company joined in Opinion with Sir *Thomas*, and were surprized they had not hit upon it before.

Mr. *Worthy* told them it was impossible, that his Wife knew Miss *Dickens* and all her People very well, and could not be mistaken, and had received Letters from some of her Relations in *London*, to whom she was setting out, and would probably be gone before he returned.

This Evasion would not satisfy Sir *Thomas*; on the contrary, the Words being gone gave him the Alarm, and he started from the Table, and swore he would go immediately and satisfy himself with his own Eyes, for his
Mind

Mind suggested it to him so strongly that it was Miss *Summers*, that nothing less than ocular Demonstration would satisfy him.

The good-natured Mr. *Worthy* was highly perplexed how to behave to prevent a Discovery, which he saw, by the Specimen of Sir *Thomas's* violent Temper, was of more Importance to the young Lady than he formerly believed it.

To oppose his going, he saw would only determine him the more in his Notions, therefore he judged it best to comply with his Humour and to attend him himself on his Journey, tho' the Business which brought him to the Assizes was not yet finished, hoping as they could not reach his House that Night he might find some means to give his Wife Notice of this unwelcome Visit.

It was with some Difficulty the impatient Baronet could be prevailed on by the Company to stay till Dinner was over, though that Time was necessary to get their Horses ready. As Mr. *Worthy* told him he would accompany him, he desired leave of Sir *Thomas* to stop for ten Minutes to the next Inn to give some Orders relating to an Affair he was concerned in at the Assizes. Not-

withstanding the Knight's violent Hurry, good Manners obliged him to submit to the Delay, which Mr. *Worthy* made use of in writing a short Line to his Lady, acquainting her in few Words with the Reason of Sir *Thomas's* Visit, and leaving the Management of the whole to her Prudence; which he dispatched by a trusty Messenger, who was directed to make as much Speed with it as if Life and Death depended on it.

The Roads were not over and above good, and the Night exceeding dark, at which Mr. *Worthy* was by no Means displeased, as it retarded Sir *Thomas*, and gave him greater Hopes that his Messenger would get to his House some Hours before them. They travelled till near Midnight, and then was obliged to put up till Morning, on Account of their Horses being very much jaded. They arrived at Mr. *Worthy's* House about nine o'Clock next Morning, and found Mrs. *Worthy* in the Parlour waiting their Arrival, tho' to them she put on an Air of great Surprise at seeing Mr. *Worthy* so suddenly returned. After Mr. *Worthy* had introduced Sir *Thomas* to his Lady, he told her the Cause of Sir *Thomas's* Visit, and begged that Miss *Dickens* might be called, that he might be cured of his Suspicions,

cions, which, added he, I must own, appear to have some Foundation. Mrs. *Worthy* told the impatient Baronet, that she was glad of any thing that was the Occasion of her receiving the Honour of a Visit from a Gentleman for whom she had so great an Esteem, but was sorry that his Journey would not afford him the Satisfaction he expected; for indeed, says she, I can assure you the young Lady in my House is not Miss *Summers*, but a young Gentlewoman of a very good Family, tho' reduced, and going to *London* to wait on a Lady to whom she has Recommendations; but you shall see the young Woman, I suppose she is now stirring, I think I heard her up as I passed her Chamber. Sir *Thomas* replied with a Sigh, that he was afraid indeed the Hopes he had conceived of seeing Miss *Summers* were ill founded, but hoped she would excuse his Curiosity for pressing for a Sight of this young Lady, who by Mr. *Winfield's* Description of her, meaning the Gentleman who first brought up the Discourse at *Caermarthen*, must very much resemble the unhappy Miss *Summers*.

Mrs. *Worthy* rung the Bell for a Servant and desired her to step up with her Compliments

pliments to Miss *Dickens*, and to tell her she begged her Company in the Parlour.

When Sir *Thomas* heard a Foot upon the Stair-Case his Heart went pit a pat, for it was impossible for him to divest himself of the Notion that Miss *Dickens* could be any body else than Miss *Summers*; and when the Door opened he gave a sudden Start from his Chair as if he would throw himself into her Arms, and was almost at the Door before he recovered himself, which was only into a melancholy Surprize. He saw a young Lady enter pretty much of the Size, Make, and nearly of Miss *Summers's* Complexion, but how vastly wide, at least in his Eyes, was the Difference in the Air, the Mien, and Features of the two Persons; he was amaz'd that Description should give a Likeness to two Objects so vastly different in their Nature.

He was so shocked with the Disappointment, that though by the Manner in which he left the Chair and met the Lady on her Entrance, he ought in Decency to have paid her his Compliments; yet he was mute and unable to utter a word. Mrs. *Worthy* saw his Confusion, and heartily pitied the Concern she saw him in. This Sir *Thomas*, said she,

she, is Miss *Dickens*, an Acquaintance of mine for whom I have a great Esteem, which recovered the Baronet in some manner to his Senses, and enabled him to salute Miss *Dickens*, tho' in a very constrain'd and awkward manner. Sir *Thomas* was for some time silent, at last addressing himself to Mr. *Worthy*, I am heartily ashamed, Sir, that my Folly has given you so much Trouble ; but if you knew, how much the Fate of Miss *Summers* is connected with my Happiness, you would not blame me for catching at every thing that gave me the least Hopes of recovering the Dear Wanderer, who is wretched perhaps only because I am foolish. He spoke this with such passionate Sincerity, that the Good-natured Mr. *Worthy* was sorry he was not at liberty to indulge him with a Sight of what he priz'd so much, and assured him that he thought any thing that contributed to Sir *Thomas Bountiful's* Satisfaction far from being troublesome ; but, continued he, in a Voice more chearful, as we have the Pleasure of your Company on the Occasion, I hope you'll not think of leaving us, for a few Days ; I have lately got a Pack of fresh Hounds, which I have not tried, and should be glad of your Company Tomorrow, after you are recovered from last Night's Fatigue.

Sir *Thomas*, whose Mind was never at Ease but when he was rambling in search of his adored Miss *Summers*, politely excused himself, and begged he might be permitted to go immediately. Mr. *Worthy* judged it would be inconvenient to be very pressing for his Stay at that Time, and contented himself with his Promise to return when he was capable of being more tolerable Company; and the Baronet, after being prevailed on, with much Difficulty to stay Dinner, took Horse in the Evening, on his Return to *Bounty-Park*.

When Mr. *Worthy* returned to the Par-
lour from seeing Sir *Thomas* to his Horse,
he found Miss *Summers* and the Represen-
tative of Miss *Dickens* rejoicing with Mrs.
Worthy on the Success of their little Plot.
Mr. *Worthy* embraced the fair Actress and
complimented her highly on the Manner she
had acted her Part, and entered into a short
Raillery on several little Incidents in the Con-
versation where she was in Danger of being
embarrassed, and in Commendation of the
Quickness of her Wit in recovering herself.
But added he, pray tell me to whom shall I
ascribe

ascribe the Contrivance of this Escape; for my Part I was in such Dread of a Discovery, that I could form no other Idea to myself to avoid it, but by Miss's getting out of the Way, which was the Reason I sent you the Express, and which I concluded had happened when I found you in the Parlour with so much Content and Composure in your Looks, but when you sent up for Miss *Dickens* and denied her to be Miss *Summers*, I was quite at a Loss what to think: But you have play'd your Part so handsomely I shall recommend each of you to a Place in the Playhouse; but tell me who is the Author, the Actors deserve much, but the Author more Praise. Indeed, Mr. *Worthy*, I think you need not be long guessing, replied Mrs. *Worthy*, for my Part I have no Claim to it, I should make but a dull dramatick Writer, and Miss *Summers* was in such a dreadful Fright, that till within this Hour I cannot properly say she has been sensible; for on the Arrival of your Express, and my reading her your Letter, she fainted away two or three Times; and when she was about to speak, it was only to beg to be carried out of the House, which had certainly been done if she had been able, or in any Condition to be removed, but it could not be

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done, unless it had been in a Coffin, for she was fit for no other Carriage.

As we were every Moment in dread of your coming, for my Share, I think I never passed two or three Hours in such exquisite Agony, what with Concern to see the dear Creature so afflicted, and the Uneasiness I was in that I could think of no Means to save her from what she dreaded so much, I was ready to go distracted. My Cousin *Maria* came to the House just as you took Horse, and shared in all our Perplexity, tho' she was ignorant of the real Cause. I judged that by the half Expressions Miss dropped in her Intervals and the frequent Whispers she and I had, that *Maria* must suspect some Mystery, and perhaps might think it worse than it was, therefore to ease myself and have the Advantage of her Advice, I let her into the whole Secret, which I think was a great Happiness; for in an Instant her ready Wit hit upon the Plot you have seen executed, which has succeeded beyond all possible Expectation.

The amiable Miss *Summers* returned her unfeigned Acknowledgments to the two Ladies for the Tenderness they had expressed for her, and thanked Mr. *Worthy* for the
Trouble

Trouble he had taken on her Account, But, added she, tho' we have hitherto escaped, yet since the Country has got it into their Heads that Miss *Dickens* and the unhappy *Charlotte Summers* are indeed the same Person, the innocent Imposition we have put upon Sir *Thomas* may be yet discover'd, and not only the Place of my Retreat known, but my best Friends may be involved in his Displeasure for assisting in the Cheat. Therefore I hope my dear Mrs. *Worthy* will not think me peevishly anxious, if I desire to leave her as soon as possible, since the Danger is so great in my staying, and that no other Inconvenience can happen in my setting out for *London* immediately, but my lying concealed in some private House in the City till Mrs. *Davis* shall have Occasion for me.

This Suggestion of Miss was too reasonable not to meet with proper Regard ; and though it was almost Death to the friendly and affectionate Mrs. *Worthy* to part with her, yet she consented that she should set out on the next Day but one. Miss proposed to have gone by the Stage from *Cowan-Gatbury*, as had been her first Plan, but Mr. *Worthy* would not consent to it, but sent his own Chair and Four with her thirty Miles further, to the House of a Gentle-

L 5. man

man that lay on the Post-Road, who would see her into the Stage from thence with greater Privacy, than if she had gone from *Cowan Gathbury*, where her Story, as Miss *Dickens*, was public, and where it might follow her to *London*, by Means of the Passengers from thence.

The Morning for her Departure arrived, and the motherly Mrs. *Worthy* furnished her with a Portmantua, into which she put Gowns, and other Apparel, without consulting Miss *Summers* about it, and would not permit her to examine it, but saw her pack up the little she had brought from the Farmer's, and gave it to the Servant that was to attend her, till he saw her in the Stage. The Parting with the good-natured Miss *Maria* and Mrs. *Worthy*, was truly tender; both expressing the utmost Regard for the fair Traveller, and she in making the most grateful Acknowledgments that the Sense of such friendly Treatment could inspire a virtuous Mind with. At last they parted with mutual Tears, and repeated Promises of the most sincere Friendship, and Mr. *Worthy* handed her to the Chair, and at parting with her made a handsome Apology, that he took the Liberty to trouble her with a Letter to a Friend of his at *London*, which
he

he begged she might deliver by some trusty Hand, so soon as she arrived. She took the Letter, assuring him that she would take Pleasure in executing his Commands; and ordered the Coachman to drive on, made him and the Ladies who were at the Window a low Bow, and set out with a Heart sensibly touch'd at parting with Friends of so uncommon a Share of Generosity. She had still the Letter in her Hand, which she was about to put into her Pocket, when she observ'd that it had only a Flying Seal, by which she guessed rightly that it was left so on Purpose for her Perusal, and expected that it might be a Letter of Recommendation to the Friendship of some Person of Worth, when, on opening it, she found it was no more nor less than an Order on ——— a Banker, for the Payment of twenty Pounds to her or Order, by the Name of Miss *Sally Dickens*. The Value of the Present had nothing in it to elate her Spirits, as she was far from a being of a covetous Disposition, but the polite Manner in which so considerable a Present was made her, doubly enhanced the Value of it, and endeared the generous Giver to her grateful Heart. The Thoughts of the remarkable Protection divine Providence had afforded her in rescuing her from such imminent

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Danger,

Danger, and raising her up so valuable a Friendship as that of the Family of Mr. *Worthy*, by the very means which the Malice of her Enemies had projected for her Ruin, confirmed her in her virtuous Resolution, gave her chearful Hopes that sometime or other her Misfortunes would have a happy Issue, and made her Journey pleasant and easy. She arrived safe that Night at the House of Mr. *Worthy's* Friend, who received her with all the Marks of Esteem and Affection she could desire. A Place was taken for her that same Night in the Stage for *London*, for which she set out early next Mopning, and happened to meet with very civil Usage from the Passengers in the Stage, and arrived safe at her Journey's End without any cross Accident.

C H A P. III.

Containing her first Acquaintance with Captain Price, and her Visit to Mrs. Barnet the famous Fortune-teller in the Old-Baily.

AS Mrs. *Worthy* knew Miss was not to go to her Place till about a Fortnight after her Arrival at *London*, beside strong Reccommendations to her intended.

tended Mistress, Mrs. *Davis*, she furnish'd her with a Letter to one Mrs. *Morrice* a grave Widow Gentlewoman, with whom Mrs. *Wortby* and her Family generally lodg'd when in Town, desiring that Gentlewoman to furnish Miss with Lodgings, and to be particularly tender of her for the Time she might be out of Place.

Miss no sooner alighted at the Inn, than she took a Coach and went directly for Mrs. *Morrice's*, who on the Receipt of Mrs. *Wortby's* Letter, receiv'd her with great Respect and Civility, and regretted that she had it not in her Power to furnish her with an Apartment in her own House, as she was at that time full of Lodgers, but that she would send to enquire for one proper for her, and would do her otherways all the Service in her Power. She sent the Maid to two or three Places of her Acquaintance, but found all their Rooms engag'd, which gave Miss great Uneasiness, as the Evening was pretty far advanced, and she was very unwilling to lodge in any House with which Mrs. *Morrice* was not perfectly well acquainted.

When the Maid had returned from enquiring at all the Places Mrs. *Morrice* could

recollect without Success, they were all at their Wits end, till the Maid, a forward brisk Girl said, Oh la, Madam, I know a House where the Gentlewoman may be provided in a very handsome two-pair of Stairs forward ; they are very civil People, I have a Cousin that is Maid there, its only hard by, if you please I'll go and bespeak it. I could wish, reply'd Miss, that Mrs. *Morrice* herself knew something of the People, for they say Strangers cannot be too cautious here in *London*: You are in the right, Madam, returned Mrs. *Morrice*, to be upon your Guard, but I know the Girl is an honest Girl, she has been with me these several Years, and durst not mention a Place where you would not be safe ; you can but go there for a Night or two till I have time to look out for another in case you should not like it. Miss had nothing to object, the Maid went and hired the Lodging, and Mrs. *Morrice* was so good natur'd as to go along with her, to recommend her in a particular Manner to the Landlady, who appeared a decent Motherly-looking Woman, and at first Sight express'd a more than ordinary Fondness for Miss *Summers*, known now only by the Name of Miss *Dickens*, by which Name

Name I shall mention her for the two or three following Chapters.

When Mrs. *Morrice* left her, the Landlady introduced her Daughter, a young Woman much about Miss's Age, in whose Face there appeared so much seeming Innocence and plain good Nature, that Miss readily conceived an Esteem for her, and expressed her Satisfaction in having such a Companion during the short Time she should stay in the House. *Polly Wellers*, for that was the young Woman's Name, was not deficient in returning Miss's Compliment, and in a little time a pretty strict Intimacy commenced between them.

As Miss was not to deliver her Letter to Mrs. *Davis* till about the Time that Lady had intimated Mrs. *Brown* was to leave her, she kept her Room for two or three Days to refresh herself after her Journey ; during which time, the Landlady and her Daughter *Polly* treated her with great Civility and did all in their Power to divert her, and she could hear nothing in the Family but great Decency and Decorum. There were other Lodgers in the House, but she had seen none of them, and told Mrs. *Morrice*, who came to visit her the second Day after her coming

coming there, that she believ'd she was very well lodg'd, and was very well used.

The fourth Day she and *Polly* took a Coach and went to the Bankers to receive Mr. *Worthy's* Order, and was paid the Cash directly, and from thence went to see the Tower and some other of the Curiosities in and about Town. They returned in the Evening after spending most of the Day abroad, and went into the Parlour, where Mrs. *Weller* the Landlady invited her to stay and sup. They play'd at Cards to pass the Time away till Supper was serv'd in, which was no sooner on the Table, than a young spruce Officer of the Guards dressed as for the Drawing-room enter'd the Room, and was introduced to Miss as a Gentleman that lodg'd in the first Floor. He accosted her pretty familiarly, at which she was not over and above surpriz'd, as she pass'd in the House only for a young Woman that was going into the Service of a Lady of Quality. They all sat down to Table, and the young Officer appeared all Life and Spirit, and said a great many gallant Things to Miss, to which she made but little answer, as she affected to appear as much the Country Girl as possible, in order to conceal her real Circumstances and keep up

up the Character of *Sally Dickens*, designed only for a waiting Maid ; but the familiar Manner in which he stared at her gave her some Uneasiness, and as soon as Supper was over, she made an Excuse to retire immediately to her Chamber. The young Officer, who was by this time over Head and Ears in love with her Person, would have persuaded her to stay a Game or two at Whist, but as she seem'd averse, he was oblig'd for that Time to let her have her way.

She went up to her Room and *Polly* followed in about a Quarter of an Hour, and began to entertain her with the large Encomiums Captain *Price*, for that was the Military Beau's Name, had bestow'd on her when she left the Room. You have certainly, continued *Poll*, made a Conquest, he swears you have made a Wound in his Heart larger than a Cannon Ball, and that he shall never sleep for thinking of you. Who knows Miss how Things may turn out? he is a fine Gentleman, and has an Estate of Two thousand a Year, besides his Commission ; ods me, its enough to make any Woman happy, and my Mother says, if she has any Skill in Faces, something must come of it, for you are very like the Gentleman,

tleman, and seem cut out for one another ; its better, my dear, than going to Service, to be at the Beck of a peevish old Woman, and snubbed at every turning of a Straw, or the misplacing of a Pin. Why you are dumb, you don't seem rejoiced at it? upon my Life I should be ready to jump out of my seven Senses, if I had such a Prospect.

Miss let her run on without Interruption, and out of pure good Nature attributed all she said to the Girl's seeming Simplicity, not in the least suspecting any Design in this long Rhodomontade, and told her laughing, that sure her Head was turn'd. What, says she, cannot a Gentleman banter a little, and say a few pretty Things to shew his Wit, but you must suppose him all of a sudden serious? no, no Child, you are a Stranger to the Ways of the World, and must not take Notice of every fine Speech these high-bred Folks say to the like of you or me ; I warrant the Captain thinks no more of me than I do of him, and that is much less than I do of the Lions in the Tower we have been seeing to Day.

The Manner Miss seem'd to take it encouraged *Polly* to persist in her Discourse, and to endeavour to convince Miss *Dickens*, that

that what she said was not only possible, but probable, and gave her several Instances which she said she knew herself, where Gentlemen of great Fortunes had fallen in Love with Women of her Station, merely for their Beauty, of which she said Miss had as great a Share as any. Miss turned all she said into Raillery, and they partly that Night to their several Apartments.

As the Captain had said or done nothing out of Character, and as she looked upon all *Polly* had said as proceeding from Ignorance of polite Conversation, she made little or no Reflection upon what had happen'd, and a Day or two pass'd without her seeing the Captain, but not an Hour without hearing of him from *Poll*, who made him her constant Theme.

On the third Day after, she was invited to Tea in the Afternoon by her Landlady, and the Captain stumbled into the Parlour as by Chance, drank a Dish of Tea, pass'd a few Compliments and amorous Ogles at Miss, and went out again; on his first Appearance, Miss began to be uneasy as it look'd odd, that she should always meet him when invited by her Landlady; but as he behaved with a kind of polite Indifference, and said nothing but what the little Remains of
Woman

Woman in her, made her believe her due, she dismiss'd her Fears, and saw him two or three times afterwards on like Occasions, without apprehending any Danger from his Company: on the contrary, as he appeared perfectly well-bred, was very facetious, and treated her rather with more Respect, than she merited as a designed Waiting-maid, she was pleas'd with his Company, and expressed no Dislike of making a Party at Whist with him, her Landlady and *Poll*.

Almost a Week passed over in this Manner, and our young Officer grew every Day more complaisant to Miss *Dickens*, and would have treated her to the Play in Company with Mrs. *Weller* and her Daughter; but that was a Step she would not take, as not knowing the Consequence, but mostly for Fear of being too publick, and running the Risque of meeting with Somebody should know her; but to make Amends, the Officer staid at Home, and sent for a Supper to the Tavern, which he had served up in the Parlour, for he had so much Regard to the Reserve Miss kept upon, as not to invite her to his Apartment, nor to offer to wait upon her in her own, a kind of Behaviour which heighten'd the Esteem Miss began to conceive for the young Captain, and induced

duced her to indulge him in all the innocent well-bred Freedoms he could claim, which he unhappily explained into quite another Meaning, than what ever entered into the Heart of the undefigning Fair.

A Night or two after this Entertainment, Miss began to have Reason to be more upon her Guard with the Captain, and to conceive some Suspicion of the Integrity of her Landlady and her seemingly simple Daughter. She had been out at Supper with Mrs. *Morrice*, who was the only Acquaintance she had in *London*, and did not come Home till past Eleven; Mrs. *Morrice's* Maid waited on her to the Door, and she went immediately up to her own Apartment, but was much surprized to hear Women's Tongues very loud in Captain *Price's* Apartment, and amongst the rest her Landlady in a Dialect with the Captain, in no Degree suitable to a modest Woman. After she got into her own Room, she allow'd the Door to stand a little a-jarr, prompted by Female Curiosity to hear as much as she could, but the Conversation grew so warm that tho' unobserved, she durst no longer give Ear to such Discourse, but flap'd the Door in a kind of Passion, to think that she had been so much impos'd upon in her Opinion of that Woman whom she thought

thought the most discreet, sober, sanctified Creature she ever knew.

On the Noise she made in shutting the Door, the Company below Stairs who believ'd her Abroad, and had not observ'd her go up Stairs, put a Stop all of a sudden to the loud Clamour of their Tongues, and the House in a few Minutes became as quiet as Miss had usually observed it. However she undress'd herself and went to Bed very uneasy, and began to torment herself with a thousand odd Reflections: She fretted at the Captain for having lewd Women (for she could conceive them nothing else by their Discourse) in his Apartments, and in an Instant lost all the good Opinion she had conceived of him, believed him a rakish Hypocrite, and his Landlady, nothing better than a Procurefs; for she imagined no honest Woman would permit such Creatures to come into her House, much less join in their Bawdy Conversation: From the Reflections on the Character of her Landlady and her Fellow-Lodgers, she began to be alarmed about her own Reputation, and the Danger she run in such Hands, and was so uneasy she scarce could shut her Eyes all Night, got up very early next Morning, and without seeing one in the House went immediately

diately to Mrs. *Morrice* to communicate to her her Fears and Suspicions.

Mrs. *Morrice* who was born in *Wales* happen'd, when Miss came in, to be in one of her *Welch* Humours ; her Maid or Somebody else, had raised her, and put her in a Passion, so that tho' she made shift to calm the Storm on Sight of Miss, and to receive her civilly ; yet she was so much ruffled as not to have Patience to enter into the Reasonableness of Miss's Fears : Miss told her what she had heard, and what she dreaded from being in a House with People of such Principles, and beg'd of her to get her another Lodging for the two or three Days she had to stay before she went to her Place. Poh, Poh, Child, replied the peevish Mrs. *Morrice*, you are alarmed about nothing, I have enquir'd Mrs. *Weller's* Character of some of the Neighbourhood, who say she is a very orderly Woman, and I know Captain *Price* very well, he has an Estate in the same County I was born in, tho' I did not know he lodged there till Yesterday I saw him at a Visit I made to a Lady of my Acquaintance, I warrant he does you no Harm, what is it to you, what he does in his own Apartments, so long as he behaves decently to you ; you have mistaken the Voice of somebody

somebody else for the Landlady's, I'm sure she could make Use of no such naughty Expressions.

Miss saw Mrs. *Morrice* in a kind of Heat, and supposed it owing to her resenting her Suspicion, and tho' she could not altogether calm her Fears, was obliged to seem satisfied with what Mrs. *Morrice* had said, whom she found in no Disposition to assist her to change her Lodgings, and without her Aid did not know how to help herself, went Home, but resolved to remain upon her Guard at all Events.

Her Landlady met her as she came in, and rallied her on getting up so early. I was a-Bed says she when I heard you go out, for indeed I was very late up last Night, as I did not come home till past twelve o'Clock, I hope I did not disturb you by coming in. Miss did not know what to make of it, and began really to fancy she had mistaken her Voice, and that the Captain had taken the Opportunity of her Absence to introduce his Madams, which she supposed he durst not have done had she been at Home. But tho' these Appearances eas'd her Fears in some Measure as to her Landlady, yet they could not remove the Impressions she had conceived of the Captain

Captain, whom she now treated, as often as she saw him, with greater Reserve than before.

The next Day Miss, the Landlady, and her Daughter were sitting together, when a Gentlewoman of Mrs. *Weller's* Acquaintance came to pay a Visit: She was a Widow between 40 and 50, and by the Freshness of her Weeds, it did not appear her Husband had been above a Month or two dead: At her first coming in, and the Sight of a Stranger, she affected to give her Face and Voice a melancholy demure Cast; but the loquacious Tea-Table was no sooner set in Order, than she drop'd the Whine in her Voice, and conversed as facetiously as if it had been her Wedding-Day. The Character of two or three of the Neighbours being handled with much Freedom according to Custom, and the Slander of the Day pretty much exhausted, the edifying Conversation turned upon Fortune-telling, and the Fame of a noted Female Artist in that Way. The Widow told them of a great many stray Silver Spoons she had recover'd, and of a vast Number of Marriages and Miscarriages she had predicted, which had all taken Place, according to her Foreknowledge. You won't believe it, added

she, Mrs. *Weller*, but I assure you what I am going to tell you is literally true, I heard it but last Night at Mrs. *Buzze's* from the Lady's Maid I'm going to speak of. Sure the Woman must deal with the Devil, or she could not foresee so many Things as she does; why now, Madam, you must know, yes, yes, I know you do know her, I have heard you speak of her, the rich Widow from *Durham*, Mrs. *Wouldhaveit*; why I can tell you she is married within this Week to Mr. *Nimblefoot* the Dancing-Master in *Silver-street*, and how do you think it happen'd, I'll tell you Word for Word as I had it from her Maid Mrs. *Tightly*, who by the bye is a notable Wench, and has feather'd her Nest in the Widow's Service pretty handsomely; but let that pass, she deserves all she has got I'm sure.

The Widow came up to Town, you know, last Winter about a Law-Suit with her Son's Guardian, and I believe was wearied of lying alone, which I cannot blame her for, for indeed a lone Woman is expos'd to Slights, and Rubs, and Checks in this World: but no Body offer'd; for to say the Truth, she was none of the handsomest, (a little more Sugar if you please Miss, this is most excellent Tea) but as I was saying,
Nobody

Nobody offer'd for a long Time, her Day was not come. It happened that a Silver Spoon was missing, and after that another, and then a Silver Thimble was lost, in short, nothing could be laid out of one's Hands but it was presently gone, and yet every Body about her were honest as the Day, and Nobody could think on whom to fix the Theft, unless it was on the Kitchen-Maid, who was turned away barely on Suspicion, tho' as it appeared afterwards she was much wronged. This pass'd on for a Month, and no Tidings of any of the lost Goods, when a Diamond Ring worth above twenty Guineas vanish'd all of a sudden, and no more to be heard of than the rest. This Loss fretted Mrs. *Wouldhaveit* the Widow, more than all the rest; twenty Pounds you know Mrs. *Weller* is a great deal of Money, and too much to lose of all Conscience; she vex'd and fum'd, but to no Purpose, all her Anxiety could not recall the Ring again.

Mrs. *Tightly*, her Woman, on seeing so many Things lost in so odd a manner, began to be uneasy lest her Mistress should suspect her, and was resolved to find out the Thief if she went to the Devil for Council; by great Good Fortune, in the midst

of her Troubles about the Ring, she heard of the famous Mrs. *Barnet*, and without Loss of Time, went that same Afternoon to consult her. And would you believe it possible, Mrs. *Weller*, as I hope to be saved, the Moment she saw her she told her Errand as pat as if she had been in the Secret, and that she came to enquire about such and such lost Things. Poor Mrs. *Tightly* was frightened out of her Wits, and was afraid she was really speaking to the Devil, as she had often threatned in her Passion to do; but at last plucking up a Spirit, and blessing herself, told her, you have indeed, Mistress, guess'd my Errand here, I wish you could tell me as easily where these Things are.—Not so fast, good Woman, Things once lost are not so easily found. The other thinking she bogged about her Fee, presented her with half a Crown, but she refus'd it; no, no, said she, I did not doubt your Pay, but 'tis my Way never to make Discoveries of that Kind but to the Owner in Person: If your Mistress comes, I may perhaps tell her; but for your Silver Thimble, the laced Mob, and the Pink-coloured Sockings you lost, you'll find them in one of your old Pockets stuffed behind your Trunk in the Garret.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Tightly* run home as if twenty Devils had been driving her, and goes immediately to the Garret, where, as sure as you live, she found the Things just as Mrs. *Barnet* had said. If she had a good Opinion of her before, you need not doubt but that now she believed she could do any thing, and away down Stairs she went to her Lady, told her all that had happened, and begged of her to go to the Cunning Woman, for sure as a Gun, she would tell her where her Ring was.

It was next Day before Mrs. *Tightly* could persuade her Mistress to go ; at last she was prevailed on, and they took a Hackney Coach and drove to the *Old Baily*, where Mrs. *Barnet* liv'd : But I should have told you the Widow disguis'd herself, and went only as an Acquaintance of her Maid's, and not as the Mistress ; but thank ye, these Tricks would not pass upon Mrs. *Barnet*, she knew her immediately, and to make short on't, told her the Spoons were in such a Place, I forgot where now, but there they were found, and that the Ring would not be found for a Week or so, and then would be pick'd up on the West Side of the House when nobody was thinking of it.

But this was not the material Affair, she told the Widow she would soon alter her Condition, and that she would be shortly married to a tall, thin, black visaged handsome Gentleman, whom she had never yet seen, and that she would meet him by Accident some where near *Moorfields*.

Mrs. *Wouldhaveit* did not mind her much at that Time, but gave her some Money and went Home, where, as I told you, the Spoons were found in the precise Place she had directed them to. This made her look a little sharp, and gave her Hopes, that there might be something in what she had been told about her Marriage, and she made not the least Doubt about her finding her Ring again (indeed Miss you must excuse me, I can drink no more, I have drank four or five Dishes; but if you please, I'll take a little of your Mamma's Cherry Brandy, I think I find myself grip'd or so; you see I make free, but you may do the same with me) as I was saying she was in no Doubt about her Ring, but waited patiently the Time set by Mrs. *Barnet*, and she was not deceived; for that very Day Week Mrs. *Tightly* was clearing out the Buffet, and what should she find under a Silver Poffet-Dish, but the very Ring, and what is more remarkable,

remarkable, this Buffet stood on the West Side of the Dining-Room.

Mrs. *Tightly* leap'd for Joy, and ran with it to her Mistress, who was now convinced that the Woman dealt with no less than the Devil, and reckoned upon the Husband she had foretold, as sure as if she had him between a Pair of Sheets, which she soon had — for, her Maid and she being in her own Coach some where in the City to pay a Visit to a Lady whom they did not find at Home; Mrs. *Tightly* put it into her Head by pure Accident to go that Day to *Bethlem* Hospital, where Mrs. *Wouldhaveit* had a distant Relation confined for Lunacy.

The Widow went without any Thought of what was to happen, and was walking in the Hall looking at the miserable Objects in the Cells, when a tall, handsome, black-visag'd Gentleman, who chanc'd to be there, I suppose out of Curiosity, joined Company, and conducted the Widow from Place to Place, and shewed her all that was to be seen, and behaved with great Complaisance and Politeness; and when they were tired with looking at the dismal Spectacles in that Place, he handed her to her Coach with as much

Respect as if she had been a Duchess, which pleas'd her mightily ; for they say she lov'd to be treated with great Dignity. But as he was handing her in, he saw his Footman, and ordered him to bid the Coachman turn the Chariot ; the Fellow told him, that one of his Horses had fallen down dead, and that the Coachman had gone home to his Honour's Stables to fetch another. This sounded well to the Widow, as it let her know she had to deal with somebody. No matter, says the Gentleman, I can't stay till he returns, call me a Chair or a Hackney Coach, and was making a Bow to leave her, but she could do no less to a Gentleman of his Rank, who had behaved so civilly, than offer to set him down if his Way lay towards the other End of the Town. He told her it did, and accepted of her Invitation with very little Ceremony, what would you have more ; but this Civility made room for a Visit from the Gentleman at her own House. That begat an Intimacy, an Intimacy begat Love, and that begat Matrimony, which may or may not beget Sons and Daughters. The Widow that was, is as young as I am, and I would not despair on such an Occasion. So you see how true every Thing came to pass as Mrs. *Barnet* foretold. But reply'd Mrs. *Weller*, I thought you said

said the Widow was married to Mr. what do you call him, the Dancing Master in *Silver-street*, this seems by the Tale to be quite another Man. Oh no, 'tis the same Man, for as to that Part of it the Widow is bit; however, if she has not a great Gentleman, with a great Estate and a Coach, she has a healthy young Fellow, and that is what she most wanted I suppose. But what would you think, Mrs. *Weller*, continued the talkative Widow, if we should for a little Bit of Diversion go altogether to this same Mrs. *Barnet*, and pass the Evening there: Oh la, do Mother, added simple *Poll*, it will be pure Sport, Miss *Sally* here and I will have our Fortunes read for nothing; for sure you will treat us two young Folks. Yes, yes, Child we will, come go and get ready, and send the Maid for a Coach. Miss *Dickens* made some Scruple about going, but the Itch for Fortune-telling so natural to young Women of more Experience than we can suppose her to have, and the Persuasions of the rest of the Company got the better of all her Shyrefs, and away they all went to the wise Mrs. *Barnet's*.

This Oracle was a little shy of Access, but half a Crown tip'd the Footman, for she kept her Equipage, procured them at

last Admittance, and she favoured their Appearance so much, that she heard their Case before that of half a dozen Servant Maids, who had been waiting two or three Hours, some for Sweet-Hearts, and others for stray Spoons, &c.

Tho' the chattering Widow would have claim'd the Preference of the rest of her Company, and wanted to have her Curiosity first satisfied, yet this Female Sage, saw something in Miss *Dickens's* Physiognomy which attracted her Attention, and made her deaf to every Thing else till she had cast a Figure for the fair Waiting-Maid. The unmeaning Scrol was no sooner drawn, than the Priestess cry'd out in a loud Rapture, Good Fortune, Madam, nothing but the most charming Fortune I ever saw in my Life; not so much as a Cross, all is uninterrupted Prosperity, and great Grandeur. You are but lately come to Town, you came in the Stage, but let me tell you, you'll go out of it in your own Coach. Bless me, cry'd the Widow, did not I tell you, she would surprize you; but go on, Madam, let us hear the rest of it. Why Miss, continued the Oracle, you are not mad sure to think of Service (Oh la, says *Poll*, sure she is the Devil) but 'tis all one whether you do or
I not,

not, you'll hire Servants before you are hired, and in a little Time live as grand as the Lady you thought to serve, take my Word for it, nothing can prevent it. (But you say nothing about a Husband, says Mrs. *Weller*, come let us hear that) — a Husband, yes, she may have twenty! there are two or three quarreling about her, but only one of them will have her, he is a genteel, handsome young Man, of a middle Size, a fair Complexion, and a King *William's* Nose, and walks very erect and with a grand Air: I guess he ~~must~~ belong to the Army, do you know such a Man, Miss? Miss was mute. Yes she does, cries *Poll*, sure I wish I was out of the Room, for nothing but the Devil could tell her all this. 'Tis the Captain to a Hair's Breadth, but how long will it be before it is a Match: I hope to have a Pair of Gloves, — In a very short Time, reply'd Mrs. *Barnet*; she will see the Gentleman within these eight and forty Hours, and may go to Bed when she pleases. Pish, cry'd Miss, this is all a Joke, pray speak to somebody else, you have told me enough, I shall be satisfied with one tenth Part of the good Fortune you have foretold, and then threw her half a Piece.

The Oracle pleas'd with her Generosity would have drain'd all the Influence in the Stars to serve her, but the Widow grew impatient to come in while the Stars seemed in good Humour; she was furnished with a young rich Husband, and half a dozen Children. — *Poll* with a few early Crosses, but a spruce Mercer, Children, and Prosperity in the End. — Mrs. *Weller* had for her Share a Legacy from the North, and a Present to come from the Lord knows where in less than a Month; and a Letter next Day with some very good News, but the Constellations had never a Husband to spare at that Time. However every one was for the present contented with their Lot, and the Oracle with her Fees; so all parted good Friends, and the Recital of their Predictions, and rejoicing for their Hopes served them for Conversation for that Night till they went to Bed, where I leave them to dream of what is never to come to pass.

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

Containing Oracles delivered from the mystical Characters in a Coffee Cup by Mrs. Clearfight, a famous Professor of that Art.

NEXT Morning they were all so full of Fortune-telling, that Miss was call'd down to Breakfast in the Parlour, to have a little more Chat about it, and she had not been in the Room ten Minutes when a Penny-Post Letter came, directed for Mrs. *Weller* ; she read it, and cry'd out, Good God, what shall I think of this ! As I live, Mrs. *Barnet* should be burnt for a Witch. Look ye here, Miss, as she told me Yesterday, I have got a Letter with very good News, 'tis from my Attorney in *Clifford's* Inn, telling me he has got Security for the Money due to me by Mr. *Sharp*, which is good News indeed ; for tho' my Bill for Lodging, and other Things, amounts to forty-two Pounds sixteen Shillings and seven Pence, I would have given it all for the odd seven Pence. Well, they may say what they will, but these People know more than they ought to do. What think you now of your Husband,

Husband, Miss *Sally*, says fly *Poll*, well, I see I shall have the Gloves, I'll have them from the Captain whether you give them me or not. Poh, poh, my dear, don't be so foolish, reply'd Miss *Dickens*. 'Tis time enough for you and I to think of a Husband, when we have got something to give them; hang the Captain, I wish you had him; don't plague me with him; but if we are to have any Tea, let us have it, or I'll go up Stairs again.

But the Conversation was not so soon stopp'd, it still ran upon the Captain and Mrs. *Barnet's* Prediction, till the Maid came in and acquainted her Mistress that Mrs. *Clearsight* was come to wait of her if she was pleased to be at Leisure.— Oh, by all means let her come in; ods so, I have not heard of her these seven Years, not since Miss *Osborn* lodg'd here; why she is one of the most famous Coffee Readers in *England*, I assure you she is not a common one that goes about to every Body: No, no, she only reads to her intimate Acquaintance, or Persons of Quality, who give her a Present in a genteel manner, not by way of Pay. We shall see if she and Mrs. *Barnet* agree in their Predictions. The Maid went out, and introduced the new Oracle, who after
a

a great deal of half-bred Ceremony took her Seat.

It was not long before the Conversation turned upon the Profession of Coffee-reading, Coffee was called for, and she condescended, tho' the Persons present were not of the first Quality, to give them a Specimen of her Art. As Miss *Dickens* was the Stranger, she tossed her Cup first, and this modern *Cybele* took it from her fair Hands, and began to explain the mystic Characters.

Dear Miss, I profess you surprize me, I thought you had been bred and born in this City; your Discourse and Behaviour could inform me of nothing else, but I find I am mistaken, for I see you are lately come off a Journey, from a great House like a Castle, and a great many Trees about it, which you seem to leave with Reluctance as if it had been your Home. See how plainly you are looking back at it with a wishful Eye. But you need not regret leaving it, there is a fine Plain before you, which is a sure Token of Prosperity; see it (pointing with a Pin) it reaches all round the Cup, and yet you go on with a Kind of Reluctance, as if you designed to go some other Road. I fancy, Miss, you have something in your Head at present.

present which will not succeed, but then the Disappointment is better than if every thing had happened as you could wish; it is a Disappointment of Prosperity, and not of Adversity; but if you please to toss another, I hope I shall see more; the first only gives us a general Hint, the second is more particular, and the third explains the whole.

The second Cup was tossed, and the knowing Conjurers thus went on. I beg Pardon, Madam, I hope I give no Offence, I speak only what I see here; I see you offering yourself as it were in Service to an old Lady of a very comely Aspect, who pushes you away. Good Lord preserve me, cried Mrs. *Weller*, how they jump, but go on, I beg Pardon for interrupting you; she is not to get this Service you say. I think I may venture to assure Miss that she will not, nor need she repent it; for here I see a fair handsome young Gentleman in a Scarlet Coat and Feather in his Hat, taking her by the Hand, and putting a Ring upon her Finger, which she seems to refuse; but it is in vain, for here in another Place is she and the same young Gentleman; he has some Place under the King, for here is the Crown over his Head. Ay, ay, he has, we know him well enough, cried *Poll*; but what are they

they doing? there they are before the Parson and a great Crowd about them of Footmen, with Coaches and great Attendance; indeed it is the finest Cup I ever saw. *Poll* clapped her Hands, and could not help embracing Miss *Dickens*; odso, how lucky it is that we shall have a fine Wedding, I hope you'll take me for your Waiting-Maid. What with the Impertinence of *Poll*, and the seeming strange Concurrence of the two Oracles in their Predictions about the Captain, which could not fail, when mingling with the still dear Idea of Sir *Thomas*, but put her Spirits in a kind of Flutter, she began to grow wearied of the Conversation, took the Cup from the Reader, and would not be prevailed on to toss another; which obliged the Operator to take up those of Mrs. *Weller* and her Daughter, which lay ready for her, out of which she had the Sagacity to confirm all that Mrs. *Barnet* had said the Evening before, with this Difference only, that the Planets seemed to be a little more auspicious to good Mrs. *Weller*, by intimating the Possibility of her tasting once more the Pleasures of Wedlock, which must have been a great Comfort to the good Woman's Heart; for sure no old Woman can be so entirely curs'd as when deprived of all Hopes of the conjugal Rites. All other Hopes

Hopes may vanish, every other Pleasure may grow insipid, even Gossiping and Scandal may grow nauseous, but while a Thorn can draw Blood out of her sapless Skin, she entertains some faint Remembrance of past Enjoyment, and some small Hopes that she may still act her Part as a Wife. In short, all this little Company were perfectly pleased with the sage Oracles of the sagacious Mistress *Clearsight*, except Miss *Dickens*, who thought the Predictions about the Captain began to wear too serious an Aspect, and that her Hopes of getting into Mrs. *Davis*'s Service were a little less sanguine than they had been for some Days past; for Miss, as bred in the Country, was not without a small Share of Faith in Divination, and could not help, on this Occasion, believing there must be something supernatural in the Case, when two Persons entirely Strangers to her, and one another, that is, for aught she knew to the contrary, should hit upon Things so exactly alike. It is true the Predictions were, in the main, very good, and promis'd a large Share of Riches and Grandeur, and a Husband whose Person, Behaviour and Estate were by no means despicable, and might have afforded great Satisfaction to a Mind set intirely upon Wealth, and free from all other Engagements,

ments ; and I make no Doubt but half my pretty female Readers would think themselves very well off with the handsome young Captain, or such another ; and may think my Parish Girl impertinently squeamish, for being uneasy at the Thoughts that this young Soldier was predestinated to be her Husband. What would the Fool be at, says Miss *Snatch* ? What the Devil ! wont a handsome young Fellow with two or three Thousands a Year go down with her ? and will she be so stark staring mad, as to prefer Mrs. *Davis*'s Service to such an Offer ; hang her for a mean spirited Slut, I would marry a Corporal rather than serve a Duchess ; but what can one expect of a Parish Girl ? However, I hope, for all her Shyness, she'll marry him ; she cannot do better.—That is as you think, good Miss *Snatch* ; if he is ordained for her, why she must have him, there's no help for it, but at present her Uneasiness is very rational ; remember she had all her Lifetime a warm Esteem for a *Welsh* Baronet, which since his Declaration, has grown up to something very like a confirmed Affection, and consider that she was informed of all the Baronet said and did at Mr. *Worthy*'s ; and then you must allow that it was no Wonder she found herself alarmed, when
all

all Hopes of her indulging that Flame began to disappear, by the powerful Conviction of an oraculous Prophecy, confirmed by many very odd Circumstances.——

Well, well, we suppose her reasonably uneasy, and as peevish on the first Thoughts of it as you please, says Mrs. *Impatient*, pray go on, and tell us what followed upon all this. Why she went up to her Chamber, threw herself on the Bed, and so put an End to the Chapter.

C H A P. V.

Containing Miss Summers's Escape from Captain Price.

MISS *Summers* was so uneasy with the Thoughts of the Predictions that had been made to her, that she refused coming down to Dinner, and almost fretted herself into a Fever, before Noon. But towards Evening she resolved to go and wait of Mrs. *Davis*, since it was within a Day or two of the Time limited by her Letter, and by that Means ease her Doubts in that Respect, which seem'd to press her the most, because that did not depend upon herself, but on the Will of another ; whereas she comforted herself that fulfilling the Oracle in
Regard

Regard to the Captain was entirely in her own Power, that is as much as a poor weak Woman can resist the Influence of the Stars, and the soft Persuasions of a handsome young Fellow.

She dressed herself as much in Character as possible, left in her Chamber as much of Miss *Summers* as she possibly could, and took a Hackney Coach for Mrs. *Davis's*, flattering herself she should meet with a favourable Reception on the Score of her Letter from her Friend Mrs. *Worthy*; but the Devil and his Oracles happened to be pretty near right for this once; for Miss *Dickens* was acquainted by an old Woman left in Charge of Mrs. *Davis's* House, that the Lady and all her Family were gone to *Aix la Chapelle* with a Niece of hers, who was in a bad State of Health, who was ordered by the Physicians to drink the Waters for her Recovery, and that Mrs. *Brown* and her new married Husband had gone along with her.

The unfortunate Miss *Dickens* needed no more Information to assure her that she had lost all Hopes of this Service, which would not have vexed her so much, as another might be got by the same Interest, if it had not

not put the Fortune-teller's Authority beyond all reasonable Doubt. It was impossible to be such an Unbeliever, after such a glaring Instance of their Prescience, as to doubt the literal fulfilling all the rest of the Prophecy. She was scarce able to support the Shock, or to get back to the Coach without Assistance, and when she came home, her Landlady and *Poll*, whom she had told where she was going, met her to learn the News ; but she had no occasion to speak to inform them ; they saw it in her Eyes which were brim full of Tears, and her Face covered with a deadly Melancholy. Alas, my dear Miss, cries the officious Landlady, what is the Matter, are not you well, my Dear, you look sadly, come into the Parlour and rest your self. Bless me, *Polly*, she is ready to faint, pray fetch the Hartshorn Drops ? Lord how you gape and stare ! what do you stand for ? you'll find them on the Shelf in my Closet, by the Side of the Usquebaugh Bottle, do run, that's a good Girl, put a little Water into that Tea-cup. — Not that, Fool, it had Gin in it, and Miss don't like the Smell of it. — Drink it up, Miss, it is only fair Water, and some Hartshorn-Drops, — I hope you are a little recovered. Yes, I am, replied the disconsolate Fair, I thank you, Mrs. *Weller*, for your Civility, but I wish

with I were dead. Lord forbid, says the other, what has happened since you went out ? Has Mrs. *Davis* given you a Refusal ? —No, no, but it is as bad, she is gone to *Aix la Chapelle*, and carried her old Waiting-Maid with her.—— Come, says Mrs. *Weller*, let not that dishearten you, if you must have a Service, I warrant we find as good ; but my Life for it you will have other Thoughts very soon. Pray remember the Fortune-tellers, they have spoke true in every thing hitherto. Let us hope for the best in all that is to come ; for my Share, I have no more Doubt of it than I have that to-morrow will come ; pray don't look so grave, it is better sure to be a Captain's Lady than a Lady's Woman in any Family in *Christendom*. For God's Sake, replied Miss *Dickens*, don't tease one so with such Nonsense, I have enough to vex me, without being plagued with Chimera's, that have no Foundation in Nature. They saw she was uneasy with her Disappointment, and dropped the Discourse for that Time, and she went soon after up to her Room, it being Post Night, and wrote a Letter to the friendly Mrs. *Worthy*, acquainting her with the Disappointment, and begging her Advice how to make Interest for some other Family.

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The next Day her Melancholy continued, which Mrs. *Weller* and her Daughter endeavoured to dissipate, by dinging her Ears with the Captain ; and when that had not the desired Effect, they found Means to bring the Captain himself to rouze up her Spirits. He came into the Parlour a little after Dinner, where she was, for she dined in the Family, as knowing no other Way to dispose of herself ; and he had not been sat down two or three Minutes, and paid her the usual Compliments, than first Mrs. *Weller*, and then her Daughter quitted the Room, on some frivolous Pretence, and left the Captain and Miss alone.

The young Officer was silent for a Minute or two, then looking earnestly, but very respectfully at her, I'm sorry, Miss, says he, to see you so melancholy To-day, something seems to lay heavy upon your Spirits : I should be sorry to think any thing should give you Uneasiness, and should be glad to do any Thing in my Power to restore you to that sprightly Humour you so agreeably entertained us with since you came here. I hope you have met with nothing in the Family to fret you. By no means, Sir, replied Miss, but one cannot always be in the
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same Temper, and you only fancy I am dull. No, no, 'tis no Fancy, my dear Miss. These charming Eyes have lost much of their Vivacity, and an Air of Sadness hangs on all your Countenance, in spite of your Inclinations to disguise it. Be not displeased, my charming Girl, that I interest myself in your Welfare, and give me leave to assure you that I cannot be at ease till you are once more that gay, enchanting Creature you was but a Day or two ago. I have partly learned what chagrines you, it is the Disappointment of the Place you expected; but let not that disturb you, my Charmer, you are cut out for something else than Servitude; no, that Form, that Face, those Hands, endeavouring to lay hold of one of them, which she hastily pulled from him, were not cut out for much Drudgery; you are more capable of giving exquisite Bliss to the Man you love, and must not think of slavish Dependence. You may command my Fortune, 'tis at your Service, and as Earnest accept this Purse, it may be of Use to you till I can provide for you suitably, only in return, give me leave to adore you.

The first part of the young Officer's Speech gave her some Pain, yet she bore it pretty patiently, but the last of it, when he offered

her the Purse, set her all in a Flame, her Pride resented the Indignity, and made her Virtue take the Alarm, as that was a Mode of Courtship, as she imagined, very improper to introduce an honourable Proposal. She took up the Purse which he had thrown in her Lap, with an Air of the utmost Indignation and Contempt, and threw it at him, at the same time giving him such a Look as sufficiently prepared him for the Sequel. Take, Sir, your Money, and bestow it and your impertinent Gallantry where it is acceptable. Whatever you may think of me at present, I am far above receiving an Indignity from you, and started from her Chair, and was pushing by him out of the Room. He caught her in his Arms, endeavouring to snatch a Kiss from her; You must not leave me in a Passion, my charming Angel, by Heaven I did not mean to affront you, I would sooner die than give you the least Cause of Offence; tell me how I shall appease the Anger I see in those lovely Eyes. Unhand me, Sir, struggling from him, and keep your Distance, if you have any thing of the Gentleman; I cannot, must not be used with such saucy Freedom. She gave a Spring from his Arms, quitted the Parlour and went up to her own Chamber in a mighty Passion.

Passion at the indecent Freedom she thought he had taken with her.

Here the Fortune-teller's Predictions occurred to her Memory, which made her reflect calmly upon what Judgment she should form on his Behaviour. It was some time before she could recollect that she was not now Miss *Summers*, that is, did not appear as such, but as Miss *Dickens*, a Dependant for a Place, and when she calmly view'd herself in that Light, and compared it with the Captain's Behaviour, she could not think he had acted much out of Character, for tho' he offered her a Purse, which might be proper enough for a young Woman in her Condition, yet he had not dropped one rude Expression, at least, what he said was so conceived as that it might be explained either into an honourable Design, or the contrary. This Thought calmed her Temper a little, and abated her Resentment against her new Adorer. But to these another Train of Thoughts succeeded. What is it to me, whether he has any serious Designs upon me or not? I cannot love him; no, no, the dear Remembrance of that rash Man, whose Passion has expos'd me to all these Dangers, fill my Heart too much to leave Room for any Thoughts of another. Yet my Hopes

of him are vain; my Word is passed never to encourage him; my Duty and Virtue direct me to keep that Promise sacred: Then why should I not indulge a reasonable Proposal from another? Should the Captain have any such Designs, the World would think me mad to refuse him; I can advise with none, but such as would condemn me for hesitating to accept of such an Offer. But still I cannot love him; shall I give my Hand where I cannot give my Heart? Shall I make myself wretched to please the Publick, or for the Sake of tasteless Grandeur? No, that would be only legal Prostitution. In short, debating with herself the prudential Part of refusing or accepting the Captain's Offer, and her Struggles on the Score of *Sir Thomas*, employed her Thoughts all the Remainder of that Evening, and almost till next Morning; when at last she determined with herself to reject all Overtures of any Sort that should come from the Captain, and to keep herself upon her Guard against all Designs he might have upon her Honour, and endeavoured to justify to herself the Prudence of this Resolution on the Score of a Kind of Promise she had made to *Sir Thomas*, to encourage the Addresses of no other Person; for she concluded that her Promise to him was

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as binding as that made to Lady *Bountiful*. Oh Pox upon her for a Fool, a Bird in Hand is worth two in the Bush, she should have taken him at any Rate, says gray-hair'd Mrs. *Sit-her-time*, she'll never get such another Match, ——— but plague on the Author, what a Pother he has kept about Captain *Price*, and after all, it has come to nothing, but that the foolish Wench has refus'd him; let us have done with him, and call another Subject, sure she marries somebody at last.—— Not so fast, Madam, if you please, you must be better acquainted with the Captain before you and I part, and perhaps I may recommend him to you when I have done with him, for I cannot for my Life persuade my Parish Girl to take up with him.

She grew so afraid of his Designs, that she never afforded him another Opportunity to explain himself for two whole Days, and would not lie alone at Night. With very little Entreaty she persuaded *Polly*, whom she believed to be an innocent, harmless, well-meaning Girl, to be her Bed-fellow for the Remainder of the Time she design'd to stay in the House, which she

resolv'd within herself should not be longer than Necessity oblig'd her.

The third Night after *Polly* became her Bedfellow, they undressed as usual, and both went to Bed, and lay some Minutes chatting of indifferent Things, when *Poll*, all of a sudden, said, Oh la, I forgot to pull down the Window in the back Room, it rains hard, and the Rain will beat in upon the Floor and spoil the Carpet; I must get up and shut it, I wish you had not put out the Candle, but I shall find my Way in the Dark. Miss would have persuaded her to lie still, but the Girl was obstinate, got up and went out of the Room, shut the Window, and, as Miss thought, return'd immediately. But she was surpriz'd she did not speak, and that when she lay down she breath'd quicker than usual, and seem'd all of a Tremble.—God blefs me, *Polly*! what is the Matter? are you well, or are you frightened at any Thing? you shake like an Aspin Leaf. As the other made no Reply, she very tenderly put her Hand over her, and drew nearer her; pray speak, and tell me what is the Matter with you, I'll get up and call your Mamma if you are not well; no, said the other in a low Whisper, I shall be well presently, and threw her Arms

Arms about her, embracing her with a Warmth not common between Persons of the same Sex, and pressed her so hard that she cried out, for God's Sake, *Polly*, give over, you stifle me. However, she did not desist, but continued to embrace her so eagerly that Miss thought the Wench was possessed; she endeavoured to get loose from her, and in the Struggle began to be sensible that *Polly* had undergone a Metamorphosis of an extraordinary Nature, since she left the Room.

Heavens guard me, cried the incensed Fair, and shrieked as loud as she was able, and struggled with all her Strength to disengage herself, but her Bedfellow endeavour'd to stifle her with Cries and Kisses, now and then whispering, Be easy, by Heaven I mean you no Harm. She guessed now whom she had to deal with, and would not trust to his Imprecations, especially as he proceeded to Liberties which gave the Lie to his Oaths. She went on bawling out Murder! and at last, by Accident, giving him a Blow with her Elbow on the Pit of the Stomach, he let go his Hold; she jumped out of Bed, ran to the Window, which had no Shutter, threw up the Sash, and cried out Murder, with great Vehemence. The Captain, for

it was no other, ran to pull her from the Window, but she held fast by it, and bawled so loud, that the Watch at last thundered at the Door to get Admittance. He then let her go and ran to his own Chamber, and she called to the Watch to break open the Door, or else she should be undone. But the People in the House were in no Disposition to open it; the treacherous *Polly* came running into the Room in her Shift with a Light, and begged of her to call to the Watch to give over alarming the Neighbourhood, who were all at their Windows, some crying, What is the Matter? others crying, Break open the Door, there is certainly Mischief in the House, the old Bawd is at her old Tricks, ruining some young Creature; but Miss would not be persuaded to come from the Window, but wrapping the Window-Curtain about her, stood crying out to the Watch to force the Door open. By this Time one of the Watchmen had brought the Constable of the Night, who gave Orders to break open the Door, which the Bawd within understanding by the Noise they made, she thought proper at last to peep her Head out of the one Pair of Stairs, and beg them to desist and she would come down and let them in.

When

When the Door was open, a great Crowd rushed in; amongst the rest, an elderly Woman who kept a House over against them, and had not been in Bed, but heard Miss's Shrieks from the Beginning. The Constable laid hold of the Bawd, Mrs. *Weller*, and delivered her over to the Watch, telling her, I have once more got your Ladyship into my Power, I hope you'll not come off so easily as you did the last Time I had the Favour of your Company; and he and the rest of his Possé went up to the two Pair of Stairs, from whence they had heard the Noise, when they found Miss all over in a Tremble just as she had slipped on a Gown, on her hearing they had got Admittance. The Constable asked her what had been the Matter; she told him in as modest Terms as she could, the Trick *Polly* had put upon her, and the Attempt the Captain had made. Alas! Miss, says Mrs. *Massy*, the elderly Woman I just mentioned, I have observed you ever since you came here, and was heartily sorry to see a young Creature of your modest Appearance in such Hands; I frequently wanted an Opportunity to speak to you, and let you know your Danger; but the base Woman and her Daughter watched you so close there was no coming at you;

you; but it is well you have escaped so, many a young Creature has been undone in this cursed House; it is a Shame the Magistrates should allow such a Nest of Wickedness, but I hope they will now meet with their just Reward. Come, put on your Clothes and go along with me for this Night, and the Constable will find Lodgings for the rest of the Family. That I shall, says the dark Magistrate, but where is the Captain, as the Gentlewoman calls him? he must along too, to keep his Procurefs Company, and the young Imp her Daughter. They went to search the House, but he had found Means to get out at the back Door before the Watch got in, and *Polly*, so soon as she heard the Door open, slipped out of Miss's Room, and probably got out the same Way, so that they had only the Bawd and her Maid, whom they carried to the Round-House.

Mrs. *Weller*, before she was carried off, begged to speak to Miss, she fell on her Knees and beseeched her not to expose her, protesting that she knew nothing of the Design the Captain and *Polly* had formed against her; for alas, said she, the loose Man has ruined my Child, and by that Means prevailed on her to do what he pleased.

pleased. She cried and lamented in so piteous a Manner, that Miss, who was all good Nature, relented, and would have persuaded the Constable to let her go, but the Constable spirited up by Mrs. *Masse*y, who owed her Neighbour this good Office, was inexorable. Miss was obliged to submit against her Will; and having packed up her few Things in her Portmanteau, had them carried over to Mrs. *Masse*y's, where she was furnished with a very good Room.

When left alone from the officious Kindness of her new Landlady, she thanked Providence for her signal Delivery, but could not help lamenting her sad Fate that exposed her to so many unforeseen Dangers; and now more than ever regretted the Disappointment of Mrs. *Davis*'s Service, where she might be protected from all such Insults; for she plainly foresaw that without the Protection of some Person of real Worth and Virtue, her Youth and Person would expose her to daily and perhaps unavoidable Misfortunes. She blamed Mrs. *Morrice*, to whom she had formerly communicated her Suspicions, for not giving greater Attention to them, but hoped now she would be convinced, and give her proper Advice how to behave, as she had none else on whom

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she could depend. She was disturbed, and in such a Flurry of Spirits that she rested none all Night, and wish'd for Morning that she might go to Mrs. *Morrice* to inform her of the Insult offered her. But when she got up pretty early and was dressed in order to go out, Mrs. *Masse*y came into her Room and persuaded her not to go out, but to send for Mrs. *Morrice*; accordingly the Maid went, but came back with a very impertinent Message, that she seemed a giddy conceited Girl, quite another Person than Mrs. *Worthy* had represented her in her Letter; so vain of her Beauty that she believed every Person, who but looked at her, or talked with her, were ready to ravish her; that for her Part, since she had made such a Halloo-belloo about an innocent Frolick, where no harm could possibly happen to her, she would have nothing to say to her, but let her manage her Affairs as she thought proper, and that she would write to Mrs. *Worthy* very freely, what she thought of her Conduct.

Miss was surpriz'd that any modest Woman should make so light of an Affair of that Nature, and concluded, either that Mrs. *Morrice* was an Accomplice in the Design, which there were some Grounds to suspect,

suspect, from the Character she gave of the House, and her owning her Knowledge of Captain *Price*, or that she was imposed upon in the Circumstances of the Affair. It was hard for Miss to know what to think, and she was under the greatest Anxiety, lest she should represent the Affair to Mrs. *Worthy*, as she intimated, in a wrong Light, tho' her Pride would have resented the Insolence of the Message, yet her Regard for Mrs. *Worthy's* Opinion, got the better of it, and she went to wait of Mrs. *Morrice* herself to explain the whole Affair to her, but had the Mortification to be deny'd Admittance in very rude Terms.

She return'd to Mrs. *Massey* in the utmost Perplexity, threw herself upon the Bed, and burst into a Flood of Tears ; Good God, said she ! how does my Stars persecute me, I no sooner got clear of one Misfortune, than I fall into another ; I had but one Friend left in the World, who knew my Case, and sympathiz'd in my Misery, and she is in Danger of being torn from me by the obstinate Prepossessions or Malice of one I never injur'd. If I am depriv'd of Mrs. *Worthy's* Friendship and Advice, to whom shall I fly for Protection ? how shall I be recommended, and how can I be entertained

tertained in any honest Family without a Character? The very Name of having lodg'd in such a Place as that I have lately come from, must blast my Reputation, and hinder any Family from giving me Shelter. Good Heavens, to what Hands shall I turn me! but let me not despair, that Providence in which I trust will surely relieve me. Oh Sir *Thomas Bountiful*, to what Misfortunes does thy unhappy Passion daily expose me; how happy might I have been at *Bounty-Park*, had you regarded me less; but its ordain'd that I shall suffer, and I must bear it. Here *Massey* came in, and was so mov'd with the Anguish she saw her in, that she undertook herself to go to Mrs. *Morrice*, and endeavour to make her sensible of what she had suffer'd. She went, but without making any Impression on that positive Woman, whose Temper was apt to run away with the first Notion of things, and continue obstinate in her first Prepossessions, believing it an Affront to her Judgment to be capable of Error, or being imposed upon. The treacherous *Polly*, suspecting that as she was the only Acquaintance Miss had in Town, from whom she could expect Advice or Support, that Mrs. *Morrice* would be the first she would acquaint with her Affairs, went to her, in order

order to prepossess her against what she might say ; she told her, that the whole was only an innocent Frolick of the Captain's, whom she had let into the Room only to have a little Diversion, but that the Gentleman had no Design to hurt her, nor could not, as she never left the Room, and that he had only sat down on the Bed, and snatch'd a few Kisses from her, when she made such a Noise, and alarm'd all the Neighbourhood, brought the Watch, and by the Advice of Mrs. *Masse*y had sent her Mother to the Round-House. She told this so artlessly, and had in her Face such an Air of Simplicity, that Mrs. *Morrice* believed every Word of it, and perhaps she had this Reason to seem to give her Credit, that she might not be reflected on by Mrs. *Worthy*, to whom she had writ, that as she had not Accommodation for Miss herself, she had recommended her to a very honest House, where she would be as safe as in her own : Therefore, I say, it is probable she thought it her Interest to support the Character of the House, and to turn all that had happen'd upon Miss's unreasonable Fears.

On Mrs. *Masse*y's Report of the Success of her Visit, Miss was inconsolable, and had her Perplexity increased by a Message from

from the Constable to attend him at the Justice's, where he intended to carry his Prisoners, in order to give Evidence for their Commitment.

When she had unwillingly the Night before agreed to Mrs. *Weller's* being carried to the Round-house, she had not reflected on the Consequence, or that she was likely to have any more Trouble about it; but now she shudder'd at the Thought of going before a Magistrate, and being publickly expos'd on such an Affair, and beg'd of Mrs. *Massey* that she would persuade the Constable to let her go, that her Name might be no more called in question about such an ugly Affair; but Mrs. *Massey* represented to her, that that would be the way to expose her to more Trouble, and to convince Mrs. *Morrice*, and her Friends, that the Account *Polly* had given of it was true.

There appeared a good deal of Reason in what Mrs. *Massey* said; but still she could not think with any Temper of going publickly before a Justice, tho' Mrs. *Massey* offered to go along with her, and get some of the Neighbours who were acquainted with the Character of the House, to go likewise; she was still unresolv'd, when
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the Maid brought her up a Letter, she said a Porter had brought her ; Miss open'd it with Surprise, as wondering from whence it should come, especially as it was a Man's Hand, and found it was from Captain Price. The Contents of it ran thus :

To Mrs. Salley Dickens.

MADAM,

I Am so heartily ashamed of my Conduct last Night, that I could not defer offering you all the Reparation in my Power, and to inform you by what Means I was induced to act a Part so inconsistent with the Character of a Gentleman. So soon, Madam, as you came to lodge at Mrs. Weller's I was made acquainted with it, and desir'd to take Apartments in their first Floor for the better carrying on a Design for which they represented you as a proper Subject. As that Woman had been frequently employ'd by me in Affairs of that kind, without any very bad Consequences, I easily fell into their Measures, and they gave me all the Opportunities I could wish, to bring Matters to bear ; but I found something in your Face and Air, which deterred me from treating you in the gross Manner I used to accost others they had provided, and

and the Treatment my first Declaration met with, tho' conceived as delicately as such a Design could bear, convinc'd me, that I should meet with more Difficulty than I was made to expect. I began to be uneasy with my Instrument for engaging me where there appeared so little likelihood of Success, but they rally'd me on my Scruples, told me you were deeply smitten with my Person, and that they had help'd to work you to that Disposition, by the Predictions of two Fortune-tellers they had instructed for that Purpose, and that I had nothing to conquer but a little Bashfulness, which Darknes would cure you of, and dispose you to whatever I had a Mind. On this the Plot of my taking Polly's Place in Bed was lay'd; tho' I declare it upon my Honour, I intended no Violence; I meant only to have persuaded you to my Measures, but the Freedoms I used, gave you the Alarm, and hindered me from explaining myself. I am extremely concerned for the Fright I put you in, but could wish the Affair had not been made so publick, even on your own Account. I know the base Woman deserves the severest Punishment; but I believe you had best let her fall into other Hands, and not expose yourself in a Court of Justice against such a Wretch. The Part I acted is too ungenerous to merit Forgiveness; but if a real Concern for what
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has happen'd, and a sincere Tender of my best Offices can soften your Resentment, I shall be in some measure easy. In the mean time, let me entreat you to accept of the enclos'd Trifle, (a Bank Note of fifty Pounds) not as a Bribe to corrupt your Virtue, but as an Encouragement to preserve it, which must render you amiable even to those whose Passions would prompt them to destroy it. If there is any thing in my Power to serve you in, you may command,

Madam,

Your most obedient,

Humble Servant,

THO. PRICE.

Miss read the Letter, and could not but own, considering the Liberties which the Age indulges in Men of Fortune and Quality, that the Captain acted very generously, and made as handsome an Apology as any young Woman in her Circumstance could expect. She shew'd it Mrs. Massey, who would have persuaded her that all this Contrition flow'd only from his Fear of being expos'd and punished for the intended Rape, and advis'd her by no means to drop her Resentment against the Bawd, from whom she might recover considerable Damages.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Massey* who was actuated by Revenge, and Hope of some Gain, and not by any Principles of Virtue ; for in fact, she and Mrs. *Weller* were both of a Profession, only the one acted more privately than the other, and by an outward Shew of Sanctity, had found means to preserve her Character in the Neighbourhood, and this perhaps was the Cause of her Resentment, for two of a Trade seldom agree ; but Miss would not be prevailed on to be her Instrument, but ordered the Porter who brought the Letter to wait, and sat down to write the following short Answer to Captain *Price*.

Sir,

• **T**H O' the Attempt upon me last
 • Night ought not to be easily for-
 • given, yet I think I owe so much to the
 • frank Acknowledgment you have made,
 • as not to be over sanguine in my Resent-
 • ment against the Wretch that was your
 • Instrument. If you can persuade her to
 • make any Acknowledgment of her Errors,
 • and the Constable to release her without
 • going before a Magistrate in hopes of her
 • Repentance, she shall have my Forgive-
 • ness.

• I return you, Sir, the Present you were
 • pleased to offer me ; for as my Virtue, I
 • thank

‘ thank God, is above the Temptation of a
 ‘ Bribe, so it does not stand in need of any
 ‘ other Encouragement to Perseverance,
 ‘ than that Pleasure which is the constant
 ‘ Attendant of conscious Innocence. How-
 ‘ ever, I thank you for your generous In-
 ‘ tention.

I am, Sir,

your most

humble Servant,

SARAH DICKENS.

When Mrs. *Massey* saw her folding up the Bank Note with the Letter, What the plague is that you are about, sure you are not so mad as to return the Note; let me see what you have writ; she took the Letter out of her Hand and read it. Ods my Life, if you were a Duchess you could not act more haughtily, do you think yourself above taking a Present of fifty Pounds; od, I wish any Body would make me such an Offer, see if I should return it; no, faith wou’d not I; take my Advice, and write another Letter, and keep the Money, it will be of use to you when all your Friends have forsaken you. Excuse me, reply’d Miss, I scorn to receive a Favour of this Kind from any Man, much less from
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one who had formed so base a Design ; it would be giving him too much Advantage over me, and encourage him perhaps to renew his Attempts upon my Virtue. Mrs. *Massey* said a good deal to make her alter her Resolutions, and was almost in a Pet about it ; for its more than probable her greedy Disposition had form'd some Pretensions to a Share of it : but Miss was obstinate, seal'd it up in the Letter, and deliver'd it with her own Hands to the Porter, who return'd in about half an Hour with a Letter from Mrs. *Weller*, acknowledging her Fault in the most humble and penitent Terms, and begging her to send a Line to the Constable to release her ; which she did, and this Affair was wholly compromis'd, except in regard to Mrs. *Morrice*, whose Resentment Miss was now less anxious about, as the Letter from the Captain and Mrs. *Weller's* would justify her, should Mrs. *Morrice* attempt to impose any false Account of the Fact on Mrs. *Worthy*.

C H A P. VII.

Containing the first Part of Miss Summers's Transactions with an eminent Statesman, and his necessary Woman, a Linnen-Draper in the Strand.

OUR Fair Unfortunate waited several Days at Mrs. *Massey's* with great Impatience, expecting a Return to the Letter she had writ to Mrs. *Worthy* concerning her Disappointment at Mrs. *Davis's*, and she was unwilling to write to her again concerning her Misfortune at Mrs. *Weller's* till she could learn what Mrs. *Morrice* had wrote on that Head, fearing to be the Cause of any Difference between that Lady and any she had an Esteem for, which she was resolv'd to avoid, unless her own Justification made it absolutely necessary. Mrs. *Worthy* had writ an Answer to that Letter, but Mrs. *Morrice*, under whose Cover it was directed, had, for her own Reasons kept it, so that Miss at last despaired of hearing any more from that Family, which threw her into the utmost Perplexity, as she knew no other means of getting either Character or Recommendation. She had none to complain

plain to but Mrs. *Massey*, who comforted her all she could, and promised that she would look out for a Place, and accordingly in an Evening or two afterwards carried her to visit a Gentlewoman who kept a Linnen-Draper's Shop in the *Strand*, in whose Power she said it was to be of great Use to her, as she was acquainted with many very good Families her Customers: This new Acquaintance received Miss very politely, and told her, on the Character Mrs. *Massey* had given of her, and her own Appearance, she would soon find her a Service suitable to her Inclinations.

Miss paid her a Visit or two, in Company with Mrs. *Massey*, and afterwards used to go there almost every other Day, the Linnen-Draper using her with great Tenderness and Friendship: In one of these Visits, in an Afternoon, an elderly, grave Gentleman, who appeared to be about sixty Years of Age, lighted from his Coach, and after ordering some few things out of the Shop, went backwards and sat down with them to Tea. His Air, which had something grand in it, as well as his Age, gave Miss a very high Idea of this Visitor, and her Appearance, tho' very plainly dress'd, seem'd to draw from the Statesman, for he was of that Class,
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more than ordinary Respect. He staid about an Hour entertaining them with common Chat, and then went to his Coach. When he was gone, the Linnen-Draper told Miss, that he was a Man of great Consequence, and of great good Nature and Humanity, and had done several very remarkable Things for People in Distress; that she was glad she happened to be there, and by his Discourse that he seemed to have taken a Liking to her; for, added she, the Countenance of such a Man will have great Weight with any Family where you may be placed, and he may be otherwise of Use to you. He calls frequently here; my Husband that's dead and gone was his Godson, and, God blefs him, he has been my best Friend since he died; I'll take an Opportunity to speak to him of you the next time I see him, and I wish he may often find you here, because that will make him believe I am the more interested in you. Suppose I should tell him you are a Cousin of mine, I hope you would not be offended, since 'tis only to serve you. Miss told her she did her a particular Kindness, and she might take what means she pleased to commend her, since she could not doubt but the Countenance of a Man in his Years and Consequence would be of Use to a

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young Woman in her Circumstances without Friends, Relations, or Acquaintance, either to advise or protect her.

Nothing further passed at this Visit, but Miss went home highly pleas'd with the Hopes of the Statesman's Favour and Protection, and communicated her good Luck to Mrs. *Masse*y, whom she thanked as the Means of any Thing that should happen. The other congratulated her on the Prospect, and said, that nothing could happen more opportunely, for that her Friend could do any thing with him, wondered she had not thought of it sooner, and advised her by all Means to go often to the Shop to put her in mind of speaking.

Miss was easily persuaded to follow her Advice, in which she could foresee no Danger, but a strong Probability of Advantage, and went every Day to the Linnen-Draper's almost for a Fortnight, in which Time, she saw the Statesman two or three times, who seemed every Visit more obliging, and treated her with a kind of fatherly Tenderness, which Miss took as a great Mark of Esteem from a Man of his Rank and Quality. The Linnen-Draper told her, she had spoken to him, and that he had promised

mised to befriend her, which, said she, is a great deal from him, for he always does more than he promises; you'll hear nothing of it till he surprizes you with something greatly to your Advantage, for I assure you, he has a great Value for you, besides, that he thinks you a Sister's Daughter of mine, whom he knew in the West of *England*. Miss made her the most grateful Acknowledgments she could think of, and to express her Sense of her Civility, laid out three or four Pounds in Linnen and Cambrick, which the Linnen-Draper would have had her take till she was provided for, but she desired to be excused and paid the ready Money, and in return to Mrs. *Masse*y for her Share of the promised good Fortune, made her a Present of some Cambrick to make Mobbs, and some Lace to go round them.

A Week or two passed in these pleasing Hopes, when one Morning the Linnen-Draper sent for her in a great Hurry, and to dress herself as clean and neat as she could. Miss's Heart beat for Joy, she was sure now, that she was going into some Settlement out of the tiresome dependant Life she now led, which was highly irksome to her; she was soon dress'd, took a Coach, and drove

with great haste to her Friend the Linnen-Draper, who received her with open Arms. And now, my Girl, I hope I have done for you, his Honour was here last Night, and ask'd for his pretty Daughter, as you know he calls you; he has something in his Head for you, I'll warrant you, tho' he would not tell me what it was, but desired me to send you to his House, this Morning, in *Ar—g—n—Street*; you must take a Coach and make haste, for this is his Hour, and I long to hear the Success of it, for upon my Life it would be a great Pleasure to me to be instrumental in doing you any Good. Miss thanked her, and made some Hesitation at going by herself to call of a Gentleman, and would have persuaded the Linnen-Draper to go along with her, but the other pretended Business in the Shop, and rally'd her for her making any Scruple about waiting of a Man in Power, and of his Years, about Business.

Miss was laugh'd out of her Scruples, and took Coach for the old Statesman's, to whose Closet she was immediately introduced. His Daughter, a young Lady every way amiable, about the Age of twenty-one, and another about twelve, and a Boy about nine Years of Age, were in the Room with him,

him, but retired as soon as Miss entered, the eldest giving her a Look as she pass'd mix'd with an Air of Pity and Contempt.

The Statesman got up from his great easy Chair, as soon as she came in, and received her with great Civility, and placed her hard by him. He had on a large Furr Cap, that covered his Ears, and almost all his Face, so that nothing but a long Nose and a Chin of an immoderate Length, appeared to publick View; he had on a pair of thick-mill'd Stockings, which together with a little of the Gout or Dropsy, made his old Leggs appear like two Mill posts; he had a Night-gown lin'd with Fur, and a Flannel Waistcoat under one of Cloth, richly trimm'd with Gold; in short, his whole Figure was a Composition of feeble Old Age, and impotent Grandeur. So that Miss must have expected a Declaration of Love from her Grandmother as soon as from this Figure before her, so that however fondly he treated her, yet she was not under the least Apprehension of a Thing of that sort, but looked upon him with the Respect of a Child to a Father, and waited impatiently till his Honour would be pleased to communicate the Design of his desiring her to wait of him.

At last the Courtier was pleased to open himself. I desired Mrs. ——— to send you to me, that I might have an Opportunity of conversing with you freely. I assure you, Child, I have conceived a more than ordinary Esteem for you, and am glad that I have it in my Power to serve a virtuous young Woman, and protect her Youth from the Snares the wicked young Rakes of the Town are apt to form upon such as you. This grave Preamble, gave Miss some Spirits, and assured her something very good and pious was designed her by the Statesman. He went on, Now, my Dear, you must be very free with me, and let me know your Circumstances, that I may the better judge what is proper to be done for you. Miss thanked him for his Condescension, and told him in few Words, That she was a young Woman, who by the Indulgence and Bounty of her Friends had received a tolerable Education in *Carmarthenshire*; and that now she had nothing else to depend on but earning an honest Livelihood in the Service of some Lady, whose Example might strengthen her Principles, and Authority protect her from the Snares into which Youth are to be led. That she had come up to Town in hopes of waiting on a Lady, who,

who, unfortunately for her, was gone to the *Spa* in *Germany*, and was now destitute of any Hopes of being provided for but by the Interest of Mrs.——, who had been very kind to her. It is well, my good Girl, I shall be a Father to you, and do more for you than your Cousin can, for whom I have a great Esteem, and on her Account, but chiefly on your own, I think to place you in my own Family. The Housekeeper I have is old and infirm, and incapable of looking after my Family as it ought to be. I shall still keep her, as an Assistant to you, her Experience will soon let you into what is proper for you to know; but you shall have the whole Authority over my Servants, and are to permit her to interfere no farther than you think proper. My eldest Daughter, whom you saw go out of the Room as you came in, will use you as a Companion, when once she knows your Worth, and you may find yourself quite happy in the Family, till some easy Place at Court becomes vacant, which I shall certainly procure you; there is one which I have in my Eye, it is at present in Possession of a Woman much advanced in Years and very infirm, so that I hope in a little Time to make that a Settlement for you for Life.

Miss in very modest Terms acknowledged her Obligation to the old Courtier, and hinted that she was unfit for a Charge of that Nature, as she had been bred in the Country, and a Stranger to the Œconomy and Management of such a Family as his Honour's; but he cut her short, told her he was satisfied in her Abilities to serve his Purpose; and that his old Housekeeper would, in less than a Week, make her as knowing as herself, and that he would not name Wages, because he was resolved to put her upon a different Footing than a mere Hireling, and think himself obliged to do for her as a young Creature for whom he had the greatest Esteem, and who depended only upon him. Saying this, he took one of her Hands and put a Paper in it, in which was wrapt up about twelve Guineas, Take this, my pretty little Daughter, by Way of Earnest; young Women want Linnen, and a thousand little Things we Men know nothing of; provide yourself in what you want, and when you want Money, only let me know it and you shall be supplied.

Miss looking upon herself now as hired, got up from the Chair, made the Statesman a low Courtsey, and told him, she hoped she

she should behave so in his Service as to deserve his good Opinion, and desired to know when he would please that she would enter upon her Charge. Sit down, Child, I keep no State with my favourite Servants, I shall be angry if you treat me with too distant Respect ; think me your Friend and not your Master. She sat down again with some Reluctance, for she was willing to accustom herself as soon as possible to the Humility becoming her Station, and the old Statesman went on, you shall be immediately entered upon your Charge, for I am impatient till I have you wholly under my own Care. But, my Dear, I must give you some Cautions necessary for your Conduct in a Family where there are a great many Servants. You must keep at a great Distance from the Men, and look upon yourself as you really are, every way their Superior, and don't permit them to be toying and flabbering you ; Freedoms of that kind lessens you in their Esteem, and weakens your Authority ; besides that, they by insensible Degrees weaken your Virtue ; for indeed, *Sally*, drawing his Chair nearer her, I should take it ill to hear that any of them were free with this pretty Hand, you must keep all this for me, squeezing it between his wither'd Paws. She stared at him, as not knowing where this would end.—

Indeed you must, my little *Sally Dickens*, my pretty little Pig-nies, and these little Pigs Eyes must look at nothing else but me; and these little pit-a-pat Bubbies (patting them with his Finger) must be touched by nobody but your own Dad, and these little peep-a-peep Footies (stooping down to lay hold of her Foot) are all my Goods and Chattels, and nobody's else; are not they, my pretty sweet *Dickens*; efakins are they, and something else above here, (going to slip his lascivious Fists up her Petticoats) I shall feel all, see all, and—— His Words and Actions were all so quick, so unexpected, and shocked the astonished Fair so much, that he had play'd all his apish Tricks, and had got his Hand as far as her Garter before she could recover from her Amazement; but then she started from her Chair, gave the old Letcher a Push, which laid him flat on his Back, his Head falling with some Force against the Fender.

She had the Paper of Guineas still in her Hand, which she threw at his Head; is this the pious Protection you would afford an innocent Maid, is this the Design of your canting Friendship? take the base Hire, may it and your own Vices choak you, deceitful Villain, and threw herself out of the Room,

Room in a violent Rage, with which she had certainly burst, if she had not given vent to it by a Torrent of Tears. The old Housekeeper met her on the first Flight of the Stairs, and seeing her thus disordered, asked her what was the Matter? Go, ask the base Villain your Master, replied Miss in a Passion, and push'd by her, but in the Hurry mistook her Way out, as there was a Turning in the Entry, and before she was aware had got into one of the Parlours, where the Statesman's eldest Daughter was sitting, who had overheard what she had said to the Housekeeper. Miss on seeing her started back; Pardon me, Madam, said she, I have mistaken my Way out of the House where I wish I had never come. I am sorry, Madam, you should meet with any Thing here to make you wish so, replied the young Lady, with great Condescension, but be pleased to sit down and compose yourself, and I shall undertake to see you safe out. As this was delivered with great Tenderness, Miss sat down and gave full Vent to those Tears she before endeavoured to smother. The other saw her so uneasy, and guessing, by her Father's Practices, to which she was no Stranger, at the true Cause, could not help dropping a Tear in Sympathy to the lovely Mourner; but the Delicacy

of the Subject, and a Father being concern'd, hindered her giving her that Consolation by Words to which her good Nature prompted her.

While they were both employed in this dumb Sorrow, a Footman came in, and addressing himself to Miss, told her that his Honour desired she would immediately go up Stairs again. No, said she, in a violent Passion, go tell the old Monster I have nothing to say to him; and was making towards the Door. The Fellow had the Impudence to oppose her going out, and told her in an insolent Tone, that she needed not give herself any of these Airs, for the Porter had Orders not to let her pass till his Master had spoke with her. Good God! cried she, sinking again into her Chair, to what am I reduced, that such a Wretch as this dares insult me! The young Lady turned to the Footman, bid him begone, and tell his Master she would be answerable for the young Gentlewoman, so soon as she was in some Measure composed. The Footman obeyed and went out, and the Lady bolted the Door after him. Oh Heavens! cried Miss, what are you about, Madam? sure you will not join in detaining me; I conjure you, by all the Modesty of your
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Sex to have some Compassion on an innocent Maid, and let me pass. Be not alarmed, Madam, replied the other, in a very compassionate Tone, I don't mean to detain you, but to secure your Retreat ; compose yourself for a Moment and dry up your Tears, and I shall conduct you out by a Door which leads from this Apartment into the Park, from whence you may make your Escape. Miss thanked her, as well as her Tears and Sobs would permit her, endeavoured to calm herself, and drew her Bonnet over her Face, and the young Lady took her by the Hand and led her from thence into an inner Room, out of which she let her by a Key into the Park, which she crossed to the Gate at *Hyde-Park Corner*, from thence took Coach, and got safe to Mrs. *Masseys*.

She went immediately up to her Chamber, without meeting any of the Family but the Maid, who let her in, and gave vent to the excessive Sorrow that overwhelmed her in a Torrent of Tears and heart-breaking Complaints. Good God, why was I form'd to create such foul Desires in all that see me ? Is there any thing in my Conduct or Carriage that should give Encouragement to such base Designs as Men of all Stations, Ages

Ages and Temper have form'd upon me. If it is my Fault that I am thus persecuted with their hated Passions, Oh! teach me some pitying Angel to amend it, that I may taste some Repose, and enjoy my Innocence in Peace, or direct me to some desert Wild, where, free from the Snares of false deluding Friends, and the Violence of human Monsters, I may live but innocent with the less vicious Savages. I have been little more than two Months from that hospitable Mansion, where I learned to abhor Vice, and all its Appearances, and yet I have gone thro' a Sea of Difficulties. Oh! how can I think to pass a whole Life thus exposed, thus defenceless, and a Prey to every Ruffian that dares attack me. Shield my Innocence, Oh! my God, in thee I put my Trust and Hope, and give me thy Aid to bear thy afflicting Hand without falling into Despair, or murmuring at thy Dispensations. She passed an Hour or two in this bitter Anguish, and then began to reflect with herself what Account she should give to Mrs. *Massey*, and her Friend the Linen-Draper, of her Reception from the Statesman. These two Women had behaved with so much Modesty and Decorum before her, and so often expressed their Abhorrence of the Viciousness of the present Age, and given her so many Cautions

Cautions against the Snares to which her Youth and Beauty naturally exposed her, that she would not harbour a Notion that either one or other of them were privy to the Statesman's Design upon her Virtue. But tho' that Thought might give her Encouragement to make her Complaint to them of the base Usage she had met with, yet she recollected the high Veneration they had always expressed for that old Letcher, and how improbable they might think such a Relation, reported of a Man of his Years, Infirmities and Gravity, and that it was more than probable they might treat what she said in the same Manner Mrs. *Morrice* had done her Affair with Captain *Price*, and by that Means she ran the Risque of losing their Friendship for ever, as she had done that of Mrs. *Morrice* on a like Occasion; therefore she determined to conceal the whole Affair. She had but just come to this Resolution when Mrs. *Masse*y, who had been abroad when she came in, came up to her Chamber to learn the News, and found her sitting in a very melancholy Posture. What's the Matter, said she, Miss *Sally*, you seem dejected, no new Disappointment has happened, I hope; I was in full Expectation that Mrs. ——— had good News for you; I met her in the
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Market, and she had just Time to whisper me that you were gone to the Squire's: Pray tell us the News, for I shall sincerely rejoice in any thing that may be for your Good.

I have no News, replied Miss faintly, only that his Honour was pleased to make me an Offer which I am sure I am not fit for. — — What was that pray? Why to be his own Housekeeper; you know I have been always in the Country, and how can it be supposed that a young Woman like me should know how to manage a *London* Family of Quality, or one of my Years pretend to govern so many Servants as he keeps? It would only expose me. I want only to wait of some Lady, that I think I am fit for in some Shape, and I will undertake nothing but what I can honestly discharge. — — And so you have been such a Fool as to refuse the Place; I'm sure you have been bewitched to have it in your Power to make your Forttune at once, and then to cast it at your Tail for mere silly Scruples; why, Child, his Honour knew your want of Experience, and would have found People to instruct you, if he put up with what you knew, and was willing to learn. I think it was not your Business
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to make Difficulties where there is none, but you know your own Business best, I wish you may not repent your being so rash. I am sure Mrs.——will be very angry to be so served, after taking so much Pains ; but you and she agree about that, you cannot say I advised you to it, I wash my Hands of it. And so went out of the Room in a Kind of Pet.

C H A P. VIII.

Containing the second Part of the Statesman's Plot upon Miss Summers ; her being sent to a Spunging-House, and the providential Defeat of the Courtier's Schemes, and the Confusion of his Tools.

THE Manner in which Mrs. Massey received the Turn she gave to the Affair of her old Lover increased her Perplexity, and she now foresaw, that she was in a fair Way of losing her Friendship at any Rate, and that it would be still more difficult to preserve that of the Linen-Draper, on whom she thought proper to wait that Afternoon, and gave her pretty much the same Account of the Matter as she had done Mrs. Massey. The Linen-Draper did not seem so much piqued as she expected, but rather

rather told her, that she could not blame her for being unwilling to undertake so great a Charge, and wished only that she had not given so peremptory a Refusal as she said she had. She gave her Promise to look out for such a Place as she seemed to wish for, and they parted pretty good Friends.

This Behaviour of Miss to Mrs. *Masse*y and the Linen-Draper in not exposing to them the Statesman's Behaviour, gave the amorous old Gentleman a very high Opinion of her Prudence, and some Hopes that he might obtain his Suit if he changed the Form of his Proceedings, and acted in a Manner more suitable to her Pride, of which he conceived she had a large Share. He allowed two or three Days to pass, without attempting any thing, and then wrote her a Letter, stuffed full of amorous Compliments, begged Pardon, that he had conceived so mean a Thought of her, as to employ her as a Servant in his Family, who was the sole Sovereign of his Heart; and concluded with an Offer of a Settlement for Life of five Hundred a Year, and a genteel House to live in, provided only she would permit him now and then to visit her, and gaze upon those Charms that had captivated all his Faculties; and in a Postscript thank'd her

her for her Discretion in not exposing him to her Cousin ; and begging her to observe the same Caution for the future, but to direct for him at his own House.

This Letter, as she was told, was brought by a Footman before she was up, whose Livery they did not know ; and said, that it required no Answer. She opened it, as believing it might come from Mr. *Worthy's* Family, but was surprized to find it from her wither'd Gallant.

She read it with great Emotion and Contempt, and sealed it up in a blank Cover, directed it to the Statesman, and that her Landlady or none of the Family might know any thing of it, put it herself into the Penny-Post. She was pestered almost every Day with Epistles of this Nature, which she always served in the same manner, with this Difference, that knowing the Hand she never opened them ; for she was unwilling to give Directions not to take them in, for fear of giving a Suspicion, or obliging her to explain herself to Mrs. *Massey* and her Friend.

In about three Weeks after this Correspondence by Letter with the Statesman began,

gan, the Maid of the House (who appeared to be a good-natur'd honest Girl, and much in Miss's good Graces, as she was obliging and ready to do her any little Offices she could) thought proper to disappear all of a sudden, and to carry off with her every Stitch of the unfortunate Miss *Salley Dickens's* Cloaths and Linnen, with a little Hand-Trunk she had bought since she came to Town, in which was her Watch, Jewels, and all the little Money she had, except two or three Guineas and some Silver she had in a Purse in her Pocket, and Lady *Bountiful's* Picture, which she wore, tied with a black Ribbon, about her Arm.

Mrs. *Massey* and she had been that Night invited out to Supper at the Linen-Dra-per's, and did not come Home till turned of Eleven, when one of the Children told them the Maid *Clara* had gone out about two Hours ago, and had not come Home. Mrs. *Massey* seemed surprized at her long Stay, and begged Miss to sit up a little to bear her Company till she came in. They sat up till past Twelve, and then despaired of her coming, believing some Accident had happened to her ; but never once suspected her Honesty, till Miss went up to her Room, and came down Stairs in a violent Hurry, crying

crying out, she was robbed, and all she had gone. God forbid ! cries Mrs. *Massey* ; but they found it too true, and pretended to miss some silver Spoons, but did not value her own Loss so much as Miss's, which was much more considerable, and endeavoured to comfort her all that she could, telling her that next Morning they would get a Warrant to search for her, and might perhaps find her before she had embezzled any of the Money or Goods. This was but small Comfort to one in her unhappy Circumstances, without Hopes of a Place, and without a Stitch but what was on her Back, and some Linen at the Washerwoman's, and but a Trifle in Money that could support her but a very inconsiderable Time. But it was all she had to trust to, and she was obliged to go up to Bed with a heavy Heart, ; not to rest, but bewail her Misfortunes.

In the Morning betimes, the Linen-Dra- per, as by Accident, came to Breakfast, and condoled in a friendly Manner with Miss ; told her to keep up her Spirits ; that she would help her to recover what she had lost, and if she did not succeed, she should not want till she was provided for, for that she
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loved her as her own Child, and would use her as such.

They all three went to a Magistrate, and obtained a Warrant for the suspected Thief, and employed a Lawyer to manage the Affair, who set Thief-Catchers to work to search for *Clara*. This was attended with great Expence, which Miss launched out as far as the Stock would go, so that before Night, all her Gold was gone, and she had but a few Shillings remaining ; and yet the next Day brought along with it a greater Expence, without any Tidings of the Thief. In short, in less than a Fortnight's Time, in which they kept her in Hopes of recovering her Loss, they made Shift to run her in Debt to Mrs. ——— the Linen-Dra-per (who in a Manner forced the Money upon her, telling her she would never ask a Farthing of it, unless she was perfectly able to pay her) upwards of twenty Pounds.

The Lawyer, who had got most of the Money, began to have the Conscience to conceive some Doubts of ever meeting with the Thief ; and what was extraordinary in a Man of his Profession, told Miss, he would not advise her to throw away any more Money after her, but to put up with the first

first Loss. She was easily persuaded to desist from a Course she disapproved of as soon as the little she had herself was gone ; for it went to her Heart to go in Debt, or be under Obligations she was in no likelihood of repaying, and appeared much dejected when she saw that the kind Mrs.——the Linen-Draper, should be so much a Loser by her : But that good-natur'd Woman was far from being wearied of doing her good Offices. She told her, she had heard of a Place for her, which she was sure she could recommend her to ; but that she must appear very genteel, as it was a Family of great Distinction, and for that Purpose would fit her out in Cloaths and Linen becoming the Station she was going to.

Miss would have excused her accepting of any thing ; but the other insisted on it, gave her Money to clear Mrs. *Massey*, and with that, and the Necessaries she bought, added twenty Pounds more to the former Account, for which she was so kind as to ask only her Note payable on Demand ; not that she wanted any Security, but as People were all mortal, it would do no Hurt that she had something to shew for it, which she would never ask till she could pay her without incommoding herself.

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This was too reasonable to be refused to so generous a Friend ; the Note was accepted, and mutual Protestations of Gratitude on the one Hand, and eternal Friendship on the other, passed between them ; and they parted, appointing to meet in two or three Days to go to the promised Place. But a Week passed without any Tidings of it, and at the End, the Linen-Draper told her, in a Visit she made her on Purpose, that she was certainly born under an unlucky Planet, for that nothing prospered that was proposed for her Advantage. For my Share, says she, I don't know what to think of it ; I never saw any thing so unfortunate in my Life : The Lady's Woman I thought to recommend you to, stays again ; so that we are now as much to seek as ever.

Miss was thunderstruck with Concern, and tormented herself with unavailing Complaints ; which the other, contrary to her usual Custom, chid her for.—Come, says she, what signifies crying and complaining ; you must think of some Way to assist yourself, and do me Justice, for I can do no more than I have done, and you cannot be so destitute of Friends, as not to have some
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who will clear the Trifle you owe me ; for indeed I can be no longer without either the Money or Security ; it is too much to lose by a mere Stranger, as you know you are to me.

If a Ghost, or an Apparition from the Dead had appeared to the disconsolate Mourner, she could not be more amazed than at this unexpected Speech, so contrary to all her former Behaviour and Promises. She was so stunned, that she had not Power to answer her, and the other left her to think at her own Leisure on the new Subject of Contemplation she had afforded her.

The Sorrows of the unfortunate Fair were too full to permit her to think rationally on what she should do. She could not even relieve her bursting Heart by complaining, nor knew not where to fly for Advice. Her Landlady came in, and found her all in Tears. — I guess, says she, what is the Matter ; Mrs. ——— has been in a plaguy ill Humour to-day ; she has met with a great Loss that is like to hurt her Credit, and that makes her urgent for her Money : But, for Shame, don't be so much cast down ; Things are not so bad as you ima-

gine; you may yet recover yourself, and live above the World. —Alas! reply'd the unhappy Girl, even Hope is fled; I have no Resource but to pray to be taken out of this World, where dwells nothing but Misery, Disappointment, Falshood and Deceit. Where shall I go? How can I relieve myself? It was much against my Inclination to run in Debt, and never thought to be thus press'd for it.

Hang the Debt, reply'd the other, you may soon get out of it; 'tis only writing to the Squire, and letting him know your Situation, I lay my Life he clears it, and much more; or if he should not, you know Captain *Price* will, who was so generous as to send you fifty Pounds. Come, get up and write to them both, and before Night I'll engage you are as rich as before you was robb'd, and all your Debts paid to boot. —No, reply'd Miss, in a passionate Tone, I'll rather die, than do so mean a Thing as apply to either of them.—Very well, Madam, replied the other, jeeringly, don't be angry; I but gave my Advice; if you don't follow it, you may let it alone; but I fancy you'll find you must do that, or worse, before 'tis long.—And so flung out of the Room,

Room, leaving the disconsolate Miss *Summers* much worse perplexed than before.

It would be painful to describe the Agony this unhappy young Creature suffered, for the Remainder of that Day, and the succeeding Night Sleep never closed her Eyes; and the more she thought, the less Probability she saw of being extricated out of this Difficulty, and the more dismal the future Prospect of her Life appeared. Yet in the Height of her Anguish she never once repented that she had left Lady *Bountiful*; the Reflection, that all she suffered flowed from a steady Pursuit of her Duty, was the only Gleam of Comfort she had to support her from sinking under her present Load of Woe.

From the Time of her being robb'd till now, she had received no Letters from her amorous Statesman, and she concluded that he had quitted the Chace; but she was grievously mistaken, for the Morning succeeding this melancholy Night, a Letter in the same Hand was brought up to her, which she without opening, sealed up in a blank Cover as the former, and put into the Penny-Post that same Forenoon. That Day her Landlady behaved very coldly to

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her,

her, scarce vouchsafing to speak to her, which was a fresh Addition to her Sorrow, especially as she was a Week or two in Ar-rears for Diet and Lodging, and without a Penny to discharge it. At Supper a Hint was dropped, that her Week would be up as on *Saturday*, and that a little Money would be agreeable. This served her for Matter of Reflection for that Night, and render'd her Sorrows unsupportable. But next Morning she had some more to exercise her Patience and Fortitude ; for Mrs. ——— the Lin-nen-Draper paid her a very early Visit, and told her with very little Ceremony, that she was come to know her Resolves about her Money, for she must know what she had to trust to.

Alas ! Madam, cry'd the unhappy Miss, what have I done, that you should behave thus to me ? I made no Secret of my Cir-cumstances when you obliged me with the Money. You know I told you I had nei-ther Friends, Acquaintance or Relations on whom I could depend for a Morfel of Bread, and that I had no Prospect of pay-ing you, and yet you was so fatally kind as to compel me to accept of your Favours ; why then will you oppress me, and ask me for Impossibilities ? ——— Don't talk to me of
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Impossibilities!—I know, if your stubborn Pride will submit to it, you might pay me and much more; but you are above it, forsooth! but I'll try, Gentlewoman, if a Jail can bring down that proud Stomach of yours; it has humbled as high Heads before now;—and without waiting her Reply (which she was indeed in no Capacity to make her) flew down Stairs, flapping the Door after her as if she would have pulled down the House.

Mrs. *Masse*y succeeded in her Place, but not with Compliments of Condolence, but like one of *Job's* Comforters, with bitter Gibes. —I told you what your Obstinacy would produce, but you would not be ruled by me; you'll soon see what you have brought yourself to, and try then if Tears and girlish Sobbing will relieve you.—Peace for God's Sake, dear Mrs. *Masse*y! reply'd Miss *Sally*, don't torment me with useless Upbraidings: God's my Judge, I act honestly by every Body, and if I am unjustly oppressed I must bear it, till it please God to relieve me, who alone can, for here on Earth I find I have no Friend.—Mrs. *Masse*y went on in the former Key, always pointing at her Refusal to apply to the Squire or Captain *Price*; to which Miss

made no Reply, but heard all patiently, till Mrs. *Masse*y was called down by a loud Knock at the Door.

She had not staid away above five Minutes, when she came up again, introducing three Men into Miss's Room, saying, Here are some Gentlemen (though they looked more like Pickpockets) that want to speak with you ; and then went hastily out. The Gentlemen, as Mrs. *Masse*y termed them, did not leave Miss long time to guess at their Business. Their Leader soon informed her, that he had a Writ against her at the Suit of Mrs. ——— in the *Strand*, shewed her the fatal Parchment (than which her Dead-Warrant would have been less shocking) and told her she must come along with him to his House.

On all other Occasions, Tears and Complaints gave Relief to her full-swoln Heart ; but in this her Grievs were too poignant to admit of Ease that Way. Though she was ready to burst, yet she could not shed a Tear ; but, in silent unutterable Languish, got up from her Chair, and began to put on her Cloak and Cap ; and the Bailiff ordered one of his Followers to go and call a Coach to the Door, as he would not, he said,

said, have the Lady exposed in the Street. While they stood waiting for the Coach, Mrs. *Massey* came up, and pretended to be all over in a Tremble with the Fright of Bailiffs coming to her House, and even shed some Crocodile Tears in bewailing Miss's hard Fate. Miss who now saw her Baseness, and judged rightly, that she and her Friend in the *Strand* were in Combination against her for some End she had not formed any Idea of, took no Notice, but looked at her as she stepped into the Coach with the utmost Contempt.

It is with Pain I lead the good-natured Reader to this Scene of Sorrow ; the Horror of a Spunging-House to a young Creature bred in great Delicacy must easily occur to the Imagination without any Description. Let it suffice then to say, that her Woes were now such as could admit of no Addition, and sat so visible in her once lovely Countenance, that even the Beasts of Prey that inhabited this Place of Misery, felt some Part of her Anguish, abated of their natural Ferocity, and to alleviate her Grief as much as possible, treated her with more Tenderness than one could well expect from their brutal Dispositions. They shewed her a Room and a good Fire, and finding she

was not disposed to be entertained by their Company, left her to contemplate her Misfortunes.

Seeing herself alone, and the Door for the first Time locked upon her, she fetched a deep Sigh on looking at a little Wicket there, through which they desired her to call if she wanted any Thing; and then got some Relief by a Torrent of Tears. But raising herself at once, she endeavoured to calm her Mind, and to recollect, if possible, if there were any Means in her Power to extricate herself; she revolved in her Mind every Thing she could think, that had the most remote Appearance that Way; but after near two Hours spent in calm Deliberation, returned to where she set out, to a Spunging-House, without Money, or any one Friend on Earth, who would supply her with a Shilling, without paying a Price for it dearer by far than her Liberty. Relief then, says she, is not to be compassed with human Prudence, it is from Thee, Oh! Most High! I must expect it; if there is yet any innocent Misery greater than that I feel, and that thou hast ordained it to be my Lot, I am sure thy Aid will enable me to support it, or in thy Mercy cut my Thread of Life, and put a Period to Woes too heavy for
weak

weak Woman to bear. If I must go to a Jail, and that it is worse there, then Providence will find me, if not Relief, at least Support; or Death, the End of Sorrows, must soon put an End to my Misery. With this philosophical Reflection, the fair Mourner, weak for want of Rest, as she had slept none the two or three preceding Nights, threw herself on the Bed and fell fast asleep, till towards Evening, when the Bailiff's Wife came up and asked her if she would eat any thing. She told her she would try to eat something; but must know the Charge first, lest she had not Money to pay for it; for she had but a Shilling and a few Half-pence in her Pocket. The Woman, though used to Distresses of all Kinds, yet was moved at her Condition, and told her, that what she should bring her would cost her nothing; she was welcome to any thing in her House without a Farthing. By no Means, replied Miss, forgive me, if I decline it; for by just such friendly Offers have I been betrayed into this Place. It may be so, returned the Hostess, I have heard as much; but we are not all alike, I would not do such an Action for a King's Ransom. She went down and brought her up a broil'd Chicken and a Pint of Wine, made her eat some of it and drink a Glass or two of Wine; put clean Sheets

on the Bed, warmed it, and saw her into it before she left her, begging her not to be cast down ; that it was the Lot of many honest People to be in Trouble, out of which she needed not despair of being relieved. I have seen, said she, many a one come in here sad and sorrowful, and go out again with a merry Heart, I wish it may be your Case ; and wished her good Night.

The Rest she had got in the Day, and the Resolution she had formed to herself to submit patiently to all that could happen to her, and the plain honest Heartning given her by the Bailiff's Wife, made her pass the Night in greater Tranquillity than might be expected, and she was now so resigned that she wished only for next Day, when she was told she was to be carried to the *King's-Bench* Prison, that she might know the worst of her Fate, and have nothing more to dread.

Early next Morning the Bailiff's Wife brought her down from her Cell to breakfast in the Parlour, which they had but just finished when her Plaintiff, the Linnen-Dra-per and Mrs. *Massey* came in ; they both appeared very facetious, and treated her with great Respect, which she returned with
very

very cold Civility. The Plaintiff asked her if she had thought of any Means to discharge the Debt, for that she should be sorry to be obliged to send so young a Creature to Jail. On her telling her that she had not, but that she was ready to submit to the worst the Malice of her Stars could inflict on her. Well then, says she, pulling a Letter out of her Pocket, in Spite of your Obstinacy I am resolved to serve you; you shall find me still your Friend, and that what has happened has turned out as it was really designed, for your Good. Here, added she, giving her a Letter directed with a Woman's Hand, read that, and give me your Answer; but don't be rash in it, for it is the Crisis of your Fate; now or never you may be happy.

Miss took the Letter and opened it with great Emotion, but was quite confounded when she saw it was from her amorous Statesman. The Contents of it ran thus.

MADAM,
A*F T E R* the repeated Insults you have offered my Letters by returning them unopened or unanswered, you had no Reason to expect I should trouble myself in your Affairs, but there is something still within me that pleads
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for you, and compels me once more to make an Effort upon your Obstinacy.

I have been informed of your Situation, which I am heartily sorry for, and have given Orders for your immediate Release on Condition you accept of the Settlement I formerly offered you of five Hundred a Year, which is likewise ready to be delivered you on your giving the least Acknowledgment of your Willingness to oblige,

Madam,

Your Friend and

most humble Servant,

On reading this Letter Miss's Eyes sparkled with Rage, she discovered at once what she never before dream'd of, that the Linnen Draper and Mrs. *Masse*y were the Tools of this old Villain. Now the Source of their lavish Friendship was discovered, and the Design of their present Persecution was apparent. And this is, said she, throwing the Letter at Mrs. ——— with great Indignation, the Amount of your good Offices! Is this the Method you propose for my Relief, thou Scandal to thy Sex and Disgrace

to Modesty ! Are not you ashamed at these Years to turn Bawd to Vice, and to ruin Virtue and Innocence ? Go, tell the hoary Monster your Employer, that I hate and despise his base Offers, and that my Virtue is above all the Temptations in the Wretch's Power. It is well I know to whom I owe my Sufferings ; know, base Woman, you can inflict nothing on me, tho' assisted by all the Malice of that Devil you serve, but what I can submit to with Chearfulness, since it is in the Support of my Innocence, which must give me Joy, when such impious Wretches as you are racked with endless Anguish and Remorse.

And dare you brave me so, proud Minx, and give me the Name of Bawd ? I scorn your Words, you base Slut you ; must you not have starved if I had not supported you with my Money ? And did not this good Woman here rescue you out of a rank Bawdy-House ? And yet you must give yourself Airs of Virtue forsooth, and scandalize honest People. Come, Sir, turning to the Bailiff, who was present all this while, take her to Prison, here are your Fees. I will see the Baggage carried off before I stir, I'll teach her to give me Names, so I shall.

I believe, said the Bailiff, who began to have a very high Opinion of his Prisoner, and but a despicable Notion of the Plaintiff, as he had heard all that pass'd, and read the Letter which the Plaintiff in her Rage threw open, as Miss gave it her upon the Table, that you had better discharge her; for, taking up the Letter and putting it in his Pocket, there is here as much as may pay your Debt, and teach you to dance from *Charing-Cross* to the *Exchange*, to the Tune of a good Cat and Nine-tails. I scorn your Words, you dirty, bumming Rascal, I have Friends to stand by me that can punish twenty such Raggamuffins as you for chattering. Do your Duty this Instant, refuse it if you dare, I say.

A Battle-royal had like to have succeeded, in which it is probable the Bailiff might have had his Hands full to do between the Linen-Draper and Mrs. *Masse*y, who were no bad Hands at *Billingsgate*, and could bite and scratch tolerably well; but the Bailiff was called from the Combat by one who wanted him in the next Room. While he was absent, the Bailiff's Wife maintained the Fight with great Spirit, and now and then Miss put in a Word or two, when she could raise her Voice to a Key loud enough to be heard.

heard. The Women were louder than twenty Bells, when the Bailiff returned, and with an Air of Authority commaded Silence. Silence, you Puppy, says the enraged Plaintiff, must I employ you, and pay you my Money for doing your Duty, and dare you insult me thus? Come this Minute and carry that impudent Slut to Prison, that I may have Satisfaction for my Money out of her proud Flesh. Indeed but you shan't this Bout, says the Bailiff; for know, to your utter Confusion, the young Gentlewoman is this Minute discharged. I have the Money in my Pocket, and five Guineas over to give her; here it is, chinking the Guineas, therefore get out of my House this Instant, and send your Attorney and he shall have your Money. Away, be gone; no Words, I scorn to converse with such base B——ds as you are.

It is difficult to guess whether the Confusion of the two Bawds, or the Joy of the relieved Fair was greatest. Her Persecutors left the Room, murmuring Curses between their Teeth, and she was struck with the sudden and unexpected Turn of her Affairs, that the Transition was too quick for her Spirits, she sunk into a Chair unable to utter a Word. The Woman of the House threw some Wa-

ter in her Face to recover her, and chid her Husband for being so blunt in telling her the good News. She came to herself in a few Minutes, and asked the Bailiff to what kind Angel she owed her Deliverance; or was it only a Dream? He told her it was no Dream, but desired her to compose herself a little, and then he would tell her all he knew.

CH A P. IX.

Containing the Manner of her being relieved out of the Spunging House; her recovering the Things stolen from her, and getting into the Service of a Lady of Distinction, where she remained till she was restored to the Rank due to her real Birth and Merit.

THE Bailiff was soon called out, and it was an Hour or two before he returned, to inform her of the Means of her Delivery, which you may believe, according to the Measure of a Woman's Patience, was an Age to continue in Doubt. She had revolved in her Mind all possible Means by which Relief could come so critically to save her from the Horrors and Infamy of a Jail, but could not guess at the Source of this unexpected Blessing. At last the Bailiff returned,

turned, and she begged him to put her out of her Pain, and tell to whom, next to God, she should return Thanks for the Benefits she had received. That, replied the Bailiff, I really cannot tell if I would ; I may guess at it, but I am not at Liberty to acquaint you even with my Thoughts. You must, continued he, be contented to know that the House-keeper of a Lady of Quality, as she called herself, just as you and the Plaintiff were in Dispute, came into the Kitchen and overheard Part of your Dialogue, and then called me out and put a Purse into my Hands, with which she ordered me to discharge your Debt; Charges here, and Costs, and to give the Remainder to you ; with a Charge not to make Enquiries from whence it came, but to be satisfied that it was the free Gift of one who partly knew your Worth, and admired your Constancy. I shewed her the Letter that was brought you, which you know I put in my Pocket ; she begged it of me for an Hour, I have had it returned since, with ten Guineas more, and a Charge to see you settled in private Lodgings, and to give you all the Assistance in my Power. This is all, Madam, I know, and here is the fifteen Guineas, of which you must not lay out one Penny in my House, for I am generously
paid

paid for what I have done, and yet I hope to do more.

Miss was obliged to be satisfied with this Account, and blessed God, who had so wonderfully relieved her, when all Prospect of Hope was lost. The Bailiff asked some Questions about the Manner the Debt was contracted; and she had no sooner given him a Detail of the Robbery, and the Name of the Lawyer employed, than he said he smelt a Rat, and that it would cost him a Fall if he did not make the Bawd return all she had got, and recover her Things besides; and desired her not to trouble her Head about it, what he did should cost her nothing; but he had great Hopes of succeeding, as he knew the Lawyer and all his Tricks, and had him in a close Net, so that he dare conceal nothing from him.

It was now Dinner Time, and they dined pretty chearfully, and afterwards the Bailiff's Wife went out and took a very decent Lodging in a private Family, for whose Honesty she would pledge her Life, sent for her Things from Mrs. *Massey's*, and saw her safe to her new Habitation.

Next

Next Day her Cogitations turned upon the Manner she should employ herself; she imagined that to think of Service without any Person to recommend her but a Bailiff's Wife, would be impracticable; and that the little Money Providence had sent her would in Time be exhausted; she therefore determined, till something should turn up that would be better for her, to employ herself in Embroidery, in which she was very expert, and hoped, by embroidering short Aprons, then much worn by the Ladies, and disposing of them, she might make shift to subsist herself. She immediately bought some Materials for that Purpose, and by Afternoon that the Bailiff's Wife came to see her, was fully employed in this new Occupation. The honest Woman approved her Industry, and promised to assist her in disposing of her Work.

A Week or two passed in great Peace and Tranquillity, the Family she was in treated her with great Respect, she kept much at home, and saw nobody but the Bailiff's Wife who now and then paid her a Visit, and was so discreet as not to expect a Return. She had not seen the Bailiff since she left his House; he now came to pay her a Visit, and,

and, as politely as he could, begged Pardon for the Freedom he had taken, as it was purely to serve her. I have, Madam, says he, got Scent of the Thief that robb'd you, and before Night I expect to have her in Custody; for you must know, Madam, I squeezed the whole Secret out of the Lawyer, and it stands thus. The Things were only moved out of your Room, by the Maid, into Mrs. *Maffey's*, by her own Orders, and the Maid was made to abscond on purpose to cover the Suspicion from themselves; and the Fuss about apprehending the Girl *Clara* was only to blind you, and that they might have an Opportunity to run you in Debt, for what Purpose it is easy now to guess at. All this I picked out of the Lawyer, who is under my Thumb, as I will tell you. He has still the Warrant taken out, in your Name, against *Clara*, knows where she is, and I am to have her in Limbo presently; I warrant we make her squeak, and then I shall trounce both the old Bawds; and since my Hand is in, I'll have a Touch at the old Statesman, and make him come down handsomely. I thought this would be good News to you, and come to acquaint you with it; but be assured you shall not be seen in the Matter, so don't fret yourself; but the next Time you see me,
expect

expect your Things, and all the Money they extorted from you. Miss thanked the Officer for his obliging Zeal, and he left her to prosecute his Plan, in which he succeeded to his Wish ; for in two Days after, he returned with every Particular that had been taken from her, about thirty Guineas that was in the Trunk, and forty-five Pounds as the Debt and Costs paid at his own House, all which, he said, with a handsome Present for Hush-money for his own Use, he had received from the Squire ; for the Moment I had *Clara* fast, continued he, she told the Truth in an Instant, and that both Mrs. ——— in the *Strand* and Mrs. *Masse*y were concerned ; I got a Warrant for them both, and had them nabbed. They gave me a Letter to his Honour, which I delivered out of my own Hands, and gave him some broad Hints that I knew how to handle Somebody. He understood me, paid me my Demands generously, and you see here the Money ; but I am in haste, I must leave you, and receive your Thanks another time.

She was now as rich as a Jew, and was only under Apprehensions of being robb'd ; but her Fears on that Head did not last long, for in two or three Days the Officer's Wife came

came and told her, that the Lady's House-keeper who had relieved her, had been to enquire how she went on ; I told her, added she, that you did very well, and was busy at embroidering an Apron which you design'd to dispose of ; and that I heard you say it would be soon done. She seemed mightily pleased, and desired to have a Sight of it when it was finished, for that perhaps she could help you to the Sale of it ; and I am to give her an Answer this Day. Miss was overjoyed that her Benefactress should know that she employed herself profitably, gave the Woman the Apron, which was just finished, and heard no more of it for two Days, when a Coach stopped at the Door, and an elderly looking Woman in it, who asked for Miss *Dickens*. She was shewed up to her Room, and found her at work on another Apron.

I am come, Madam, says the House-keeper, for it was was she, from Mrs. *Morgan*, to whom I shew'd an Apron of your working. My Lady is highly pleased with it, and has sent me with the Coach to desire that she might speak with you about it. I believe, Madam, replied Miss, with the Tear of Gratitude starting into her Eye, I am too much obliged to that Lady's
Bounty

Bounty not to think it the greatest Happiness to have an Opportunity of expressing my Sense of her Favours.

She was quickly dressed, and went with the House-keeper into the Coach, and soon arrived at Mrs. *Morgan's*, whose House was but two or three Streets off, and was immediately introduced to that Lady's Bed-Chamber, who received her with all the Marks of Esteem and Tendernefs. Miss's Bosom was so full, on the Sight of a Lady who had done her so signal a Service, that she was scarce able to utter the grateful Sentiments of her overflowing Heart; but the good Lady interrupted her in the Compliment she saw she was about to make her. You need not, my dear Child, give me any Thanks for what I have done for you. I am sensible I have obliged a Person worthy of my Esteem, whose Merit and Sufferings, in the Cause of Innocence and Virtue, deserves the Regard of every honest Heart; your Acknowledgments are due to Heaven, and not to me, whose Instrument I only am, to succour those whom it designs to protect from Violence and Oppression. And after making her sit down by her, she continued, It is not enough, Child, that I have released you from the Difficulties that lately oppressed

pressed you, I want to see you settled out of the Reach of such Misfortunes for the future. And for that Reason have sent for you, to know how you mean to dispose of yourself for the time to come. I have seen the Apron you embroidered, I am highly pleased with it, it shows you are of an industrious Disposition, and that you have had a good Education; but I would not have you think of depending on that for a Support. Young Women who live by themselves, and trust wholly to their own Prudence, rarely escape the many Dangers to which their Youth and Want of Experience expose them. It was not my Intention, Madam, when I came to *London*, replied Miss, to live in that Manner; I depended on the Recommendation of a Lady who expressed some Friendship for me, to have got into the Service of some Lady, under whose Protection I might have lived in Safety, but the Lady to whom she recommended me is gone abroad, and somehow, by the unhappy Affair in the last House but one I lodged at, I have lost that Lady's Friendship, and can hear no more from her; so that I only employed myself in Embroidery till Providence should raise me up another Friend to recommend me to a proper Service, which I am sensible would be much better for me than living as I do.

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It is well, Child, replied Mrs. *Morgan*, that you are of that Opinion; I find I am not deceived in the Notion I had formed of your good Sense, and therefore, if you approve of it, I intend to take you into my own Service, to be about my own Person. Madam, returned Miss, with her Face glowing with Joy, if you are so condescending as to accept of a Stranger, without any Person to recommend her to your Notice, I shall think it my greatest Felicity to endeavour, by a faithful Discharge of my Duty, to merit the Confidence you place in me, and think my whole Life too short to discharge the great Obligations I owe your Goodness. It is enough, *Sally*, you need no other Recommendation to me than what I have had, for, not to keep you longer in Suspence, I must inform you how I come to interest myself in your Affairs.

I heard all that Part of your History that took its Rise at Mrs. *Weller's*, the first House you lodged at after coming to Town, from my Nephew Captain *Price*. You need not blush, Child, at his Name, that Transaction has done you Honour, and I hope has cured him of some fashionable Liberties, as your Letter to him gave him so high an Opinion of your Virtue and Spirit that it

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was impossible for a Man to feel greater Compunction than he did for the Insult he had offered you. You had not been long at Mrs. *Masse*y's when Overtures were made him by that base, dissembling Woman, that he might have Opportunities, if he intended to pursue his Designs upon you, but he abhorred the Thought, and was in the utmost Pain to find you in such Hands, and was meditating Means to apprize you of your Danger, when he heard by Accident of your being arrested. He judged your Delicacy would refuse all Aid that come directly from him, but no Time was to be lost to serve you, therefore he came to me, and told the whole Affair, shewed me your Letter, and the Circumstances you were then in, and conjured me to take means for your Relief.

I was easily persuaded to do an Action that carried its own Reward along with it, to succour the innocently distressed. I sent my Housekeeper with the Money, who on her Return, by shewing me the Letter wrote you by that old Villain, and reporting the Dialogue you had with his Agents, gave me still greater Reason to think my good Offices properly employed. Thus, my Dear, as far as concerned your Conduct since you came to *London*, I was perfectly well pleased,
and

and had nothing to reproach you with, but every thing to praise; but before I gave you any further Countenance I wanted to resolve myself as to the Cause of your coming to Town in Search of Service, as Captain *Price* made me believe your Carriage and Appearance spoke you of a Rank above that Station of Life. He had heard from the People of the House, that you had often mentioned my Sister Mrs. *Worthy*, I wrote to her your History so soon as you were released; she regretted your Misfortune, desired me in the strongest Terms to take you under my Protection, for that your Character in that Country merited the Regard of every Person of Virtue and Honour, but that there was something in your History she was not at Liberty to mention, even to me, without your own Consent, which she hoped to obtain, so soon as she came to Town, which will be in a few Weeks. I can deny nothing to my Sister *Worthy*, but assure yourself that greatest Part of the Friendship I find myself inclined to have for you is owing to your own Worth. I would not have you, when you come into my Service look upon me with the Severity of a Mistress, but as one who has the Regard of a Friend and the Tendernefs of a Mother for you; your Business is only about myself,

and I do not want much Attendance ; my Daughters are grown up, to whom you are to be a Companion, and I wish they may learn from you, to prize Virtue above all earthly Happiness. But by the bye, I must pay you for your first Work, which I have sent down to Sister *Worthy*, who says she prizes it above all the Cloaths she has. I must give you a great Price for it, according to the Esteem she has for it. Miss was going to say something about taking no Money for it, but Mrs. *Morgan* stopped her short, and insisted upon her taking ten Guineas, if not as the Value of the Apron, at least as Earnest to her Service, to which she expected she would come home that Afternoon, and then called the Housekeeper and desired her to go home with Miss, and take along with her some of the Servants to bring her Things, for that she was hired in *Osborn's* Place.

The old Housekeeper seemed very well pleased with the News, and was very officious in assisting her to pack up and remove her little Effects, so that in a few Hours she saw herself in the Situation she so much longed for, under the Protection of a Lady of Honour and Reputation, and what made it

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it still more agreeable too, the Sister of the amiable Mrs. *Worthy*.

She found the most respectful Treatment from the Servants, and her Mistress made very little Distinction between her and her Daughters. She was constantly with her as a Companion, and dined with her when there were no Company but her own Family, and the young Ladies grew extremely fond of her, and treated her in every Respect as their Equal; so that she had nothing in Effect but the Name of Servitude to make her uneasy, which she had too much good Sense to quarrel with.

In less than six Weeks Mrs. *Worthy* came up to Town, who was not half so overjoyed to see her Sister as to see Miss *Sally Dickens*, which Name she still retained; with Miss's own Consent Mrs. *Worthy* let her Sister into that Part of her History which related to her leaving Lady *Bountiful*, which gave Mrs. *Morgan* so high an Opinion of her, that tho' she had treated her with great Respect hitherto, yet she made her an Apology that she had not treated her with more; and from that Time she became Lady *Bountiful* to her in every Respect, putting her entirely

off the Footing of a Servant, and used her as an intimate and much-loved Friend.

Mrs. *Worthy* likewise acquainted Miss with the Situation of Lady *Bountiful's* Family: That Sir *Thomas*, after going home that time from her House, had fretted himself into a Fever, of which he had like to have died; and that on his Recovery, he and Dr. *Burton* had set out on his Travels, and that he had sworn solemnly to his Mother, at parting, that he never would return to *England* while she lived, or till she gave her Consent to his Marriage with Miss *Summers*, if ever she should be found. She added, that the old Lady whom she had seen since she left the Country, never mentioned her but with the utmost Regard and Tendernefs, and the highest Encomiums on your Fortitude and Gratitude to her, but complains that you did not let her know of your Retreat, that she might have afforded you all necessary Support; but that she had taken care of you in her Will, by which I heard say she had left you two thousand Pounds.

Miss was tenderly affected with this Account of that worthy Family, and often lamented that she should be the innocent Cause

Cause of so much Uneasiness to that good Lady, as she knew she must suffer on Account of the Absence of her much loved Son. This was the only Thought that gave her any Uneasiness for near three Years that she remained in Mrs. *Morgan's* Family; but as a dead Calm ensued for so long a Time, and that nothing happened in that Period worthy of Heed or Attention, I shall close this Chapter, that they may have an Opportunity, by the Help of the little white Space, to suppose here near three Years elapsed, without hearing one Word from the pretty Parish Girl.

C H A P. X.

Containing an Account how Miss Summers meets with her Father after so long an Absence, and is restored to the Rank due to her Birth.

WHEN Miss had been about two Years and nine Months in Mrs. *Morgan's* Family, one Morning after Breakfast Mrs. *Morgan's* Lawyer came to wait of her, in Company with one Captain *Ainsworth*, a Gentleman who had purchased an Estate, on which that Lady had a Mortgage of ten thousand Pounds; they came to

treat with her about the Redemption. Miss was in the Room when they came in, and found herself seized with an unaccountable Fluttering of Spirits, as soon as she set Eyes on Captain *Ainsworth*. He looked on her with great Attention, with a certain Air of Melancholy in his Face, and seemed in so much Confusion, that he was scarce able to make any Return to the Compliment Mrs. *Morgan* made him on his first Entrance. Miss understanding they had Business, got up to quit the Room, but on hearing the Gentleman's Voice she sunk back in her Chair. Mrs. *Morgan* ran to her crying out, good God! my dear Miss *Dickens*, what is the Matter with you? She could make no Reply; the Servants were called, and a Surgeon immediately sent for to let her Blood, and every one were in the utmost Concern for her Health, and amazed at so sudden a Change; but none seemed more touched than Captain *Ainsworth*, who said he found himself more affected with the Sight of her than any thing that had happened to him since he came to *England*; for, added he, with a deep Sigh, that young Creature has so great a Resemblance to a much loved Child, and much deserving Wife, that on the Sight of her every tender Idea of them occur to my Memory, and every

every tormenting Circumstance that aggravates my infinite Loss.

Miss was immediately removed to her Chamber, and Mrs. *Morgan* was under so much Concern that the Gentlemen in good Manners were obliged to defer their Business for that Time, and took their Leave. Miss, on being let Blood, came soon to herself, and on being asked what she thought could be the Cause of that sudden Illness, she said, on the first Sight of that Gentleman, whom she heard the Attorney call Captain *Ainsworth*, she found herself strongly disordered, and thought she saw in his Face, and observed in his Voice something that moved her with the greatest Tendernefs, which flowed so fast upon her Spirits, in a Mixture of unaccountable Joy and Grief, that she sunk under it. The Thing appeared prodigiously strange to Mrs. *Morgan*, especially when she reflected, which she had not till then, on what the Captain said, in regard to what he felt. The more she thought of it, the less she was capable of accounting for so odd an Accident, and was obliged to refer it, to some of those mysterious Occurrences too deep for human Search.

In the Afternoon, while Miss still kept her Chamber, the Attorney returned to Mrs. *Morgan* to enquire, at the Desire of Captain *Ainsworth*, concerning the young Lady's Health, and when Mrs. *Morgan* would be pleased to appoint a Meeting to treat about the Mortgage, which the Captain was anxious to have redeemed. The Conversation turned upon the Oddness of Miss's Disorder. Mrs. *Morgan* acquainted the Attorney with what she had told her about the Cause of it.

It appears to me, said the Lawyer, to be a very strange Circumstance, that two Persons should be so equally affected with the Sight of each other, and if I were not sure that it is a Thing impossible, I should almost believe this young Lady to be that Daughter for whose Loss the Captain is so much afflicted. A Daughter, replied Mrs. *Morgan* in amaze, for Heaven's Sake explain yourself, has he lost a Daughter? Pray tell me how? methinks I am on the Rack till I hear it. The Attorney was astonished to hear her talk so, but observing her Anxiety to be informed both in her Words and Countenance, he went on thus, without any Preamble.

You'll be pleased to know, Madam, that the Gentleman I had the Honour of introducing this Morning, by the Name of Captain *Ainsworth*, is Brother to the Lord Viscount ———, and his real Name Captain *Robert Summers*. ——— Good Heavens, cried Mrs. *Morgan*, in a Transport, how wonderful are thy Ways! and how much beyond the Reach of human Understanding; but I beg Pardon, Sir, for interrupting you. Go on, Sir, you say his real Name is Captain *Robert Summers*. Yes, Madam, replied the Attorney, still more astonished, it is. He had a very genteel Patrimony, and a Captain's Commission in the Army, when a young Man, but he soon, by fast Living, run out his Fortune, and was obliged to sell his Commission. He married a Daughter of that worthy Prelate the Bishop of ———, with whom he had a genteel Fortune, which he likewise spent; and what bears hardest upon his Spirits is, that he proved a very base Husband (I use his own Words) to one of the best of Wives, and left her and an only Daughter to struggle with Want and Misery.

After he had reduced himself and his Wife to the lowest Ebb of Wretchedness,

he procured a Commission in the *East-India* Company's Service, and went abroad to *Ben-coolen*, one of their Settlements, but as the Commission was beneath what he had bore in his Majesty's Service, and, as he thought, derogatory of his Birth, had the Precaution to take from it by the Name of *Ainsworth*. He has been abroad for several Years, and returned about a Twelvemonth ago in very opulent Circumstances; at least worth one Hundred thousand Pounds in Specie, besides Jewels, and other Eastern Curiosities to a great Value.

On his Arrival, his first Care was to search out for his Wife and Child, to whose Merit, Time, Reflection and riper Years had opened his Eyes, but it was too late; on Enquiry, he had the Mortification to know that his Lady died oppressed with Want, and the Resentment of his cruel Usage, a Year or two after he left *England*; and that his only Child, Heiress of his vast Fortune, and to the Estate and Title of his Brother, after his Decease, the Title passing to Heirs Male and Female, was sent to the Parish; from whence she was taken by some unknown Person, and has not since been heard of, notwithstanding he has laid out large Sums since he came home to get Intelligence of her. It is this, Madam, that
sours

fours all the unhappy Gentleman's Enjoyments, and makes him wear that Face of Melancholy in the Midst of the greatest earthly Prosperity, and every the least Circumstance which brings his Misfortunes to his Memory, afflicts him with the most profound Sorrow.

The Attorney was some Minutes silent before Mrs. *Morgan* could recover from her Wonder at the providential Discovery. You seem moved, Madam, at what I have said; I hope you are no Ways interested in the Captain's Misfortune, that the Relation of them should give you Pain. Oh! by no means, replied she, recovering herself; the Pleasure you have given me in what you have told me is beyond Expression. You have made me happy beyond Imagination; but there is another much more deserving, whose Felicity your News must raise to the highest Pitch. It is too much for her to bear at once. I must be cautious how I surprise her. You seem amazed at my Behaviour; but when you know the Cause, your Amazement will cease: Not to keep you in Pain, the young Lady you saw this Morning is no other than Miss *Charlotte Summers*, the Captain's much deserving Daughter; but the Discovery to them both must be managed

managed with Prudence and Deliberation. The Attorney expressed his Astonishment at the unforeseen Means by which Providence brings about its Purposes, and promised to follow Mrs. *Morgan's* Advice in the Part she should allot him in the agreeable Discovery.

As they were consulting together the properest Means to open the Affair to the Father and Daughter, Mrs. *Worthy* and her Husband, who had been in Town for some Time past, came in. On the Sight of them, Mrs. *Morgan* could not contain her Joy, but told them the happy Discovery she had made. Their Satisfaction was equal to hers, and all four began seriously to form a Plan for acquainting the Parties principally concerned in the unexpected Event. They agreed that less Preparation was necessary to the Father than the Daughter, and that it would be necessary to give him the full Evidence at once, that no doubt might remain upon his Mind as to the Identity of a Child that was to inherit so vast a Fortune: At last it was resolved that nothing should be said of it to the Father, till Mrs. *Morgan* should acquaint him, that they had prepared Miss, and were ready to explain themselves with Certainty to the Captain.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Worthy* undertook to manage the Discovery to Miss *Summers*, which she did in this Manner. The Accident of her Illness gave Rise to the Company to talk of Sympathy of Blood, and how strangely Nature operates in Discoveries of near Relations, especially Parents and Children; and then Occasion was taken to ask Miss if she remembered her Father: She said she had a faint Idea both of his Voice and Person, but so imperfect that she was sure, she said, with a Sigh, if he were alive and to meet him, I should not know him, unless it were by that Sympathy you speak of, which I fancy must be something like that I felt on Sight of Captain *Ainsworth* this Morning; which shews, added she, that we are not always to depend on these causeless Emotions of the Spirits, since I am sure that Gentleman and I can no ways be related, though at first Sight I have uncommon Esteem for him. It was difficult for the Company to contain themselves; but Mrs. *Worthy* told her she had no Reason to think that her Father was dead, tho' you have heard nothing of him since he went to the *East-Indies*. He may be alive, and may come home as rich as a Jew; and now I think on't, Sister, this Captain *Ainsworth* is lately come home from the *East-Indies*,

Indies, and ten to one but he may have heard something of Captain *Summers*. It may be so, replied Mrs. *Morgan*, I shall ask him the first time I see him ; I cannot put it out of my Head, but he may help us to some Knowledge of him.

They went no further in this Conversation ; but next Day Mr. *Worthy* told her at Dinner that he had seen Captain *Ainsworth* that Morning, and that he had just an Opportunity to ask him, there being Company with him, if he knew Captain *Summers*, and that he said he knew no Man better, and was going to add something more when he was called away. Joy danced in Miss's Eyes, tho' he had been to her a cruel Father ; yet so strong is filial Affection in a virtuous Mind, that she felt Pleasure unknown at the News of his being alive. In short, they were so tender of her Health, that it was three Days before they hinted any more of him, and then told her that he was alive in great Prosperity, and expected in the River almost every Tide ; and that Captain *Ainsworth* was prepared to acquaint him with every Thing relating to her. Her Joy was now converted into Extacy, which was only kept within Bounds by her Anxiety for his Arrival ; and they thought her
now.

now so well prepared, that it was Time to afford both Father and Daughter that Felicity they promised themselves in the Society of each other.

Mrs. *Morgan* gave Notice to the Attorney to bring Captain *Ainsworth* to her House as next Afternoon, on Pretence of the Mortgage, for that they were now prepared to make him happy in his Daughter; but that he must mention no more to him, but casually, as they were on their Way, to say that he had met with one, who gave him some Hopes of discovering his Daughter, but that it would take up two or three Weeks. This was designed to give a little Briskness to his Spirits, and turn his Mind upon that Subject.

When they understood he was at Hand, a Pretence was found to send Miss out of the Room on some Business, that should employ her till they had Occasion for her. She had no Suspicion of what they were about, and was glad of getting away, that she might have some Chat with Mrs. *Bell*, her former Maid, who had been so useful in explaining her Birth to Lady *Bountiful*, whom Mr. *Wortby* had fished out for this Occasion, and instructed her to call for
Miss,

Miss, as if she had found her out by Accident, and how to behave when called upon before Captain *Summers*.

As soon as the Company were seated and mutual Compliments passed, Mrs. *Worthy* asked the Captain, if he knew one Captain *Dickens*, in the Service of the *East India* Company. He said he had never heard of him. It's strange, replied she, I'm sure that Gentleman must be somewhere in the *East Indies*, and yet I have asked a hundred that has been there, and nobody knows any Thing of him. He is a strange Man, if he is alive, that he does not take notice of a virtuous young Lady his Daughter, whose Virtue, Beauty and Merit, would make a crown'd Head proud of such a Child, and yet that Man has not vouchsafed her the least Assistance for near twenty Years; but it's possible, Sir, if I tell you some Part of his History, that you may recollect him; for I am really greatly concerned to find him out.

Tho' the Mention of a Daughter in such Circumstances, gave the Captain great Compunction, yet his Complaisance to the Lady who spoke, obliged him to promise all Attention to what she was going to say, and Mrs. *Worthy* went on thus:

The

The Gentleman, whose Name is Mr. *Dickens*, was bred in his younger Days to the Army, and had a very genteel Patrimony of his own, and got a very handsome Fortune, by a fine young Lady, who married him contrary to the Advice of all her Relations; but all this was spent in the fashionable Vices of the Age, and he proved an exceeding bad Husband to a Woman, who was a Pattern of Conjugal Love and Fidelity. When he had stripped her of all she had, he went for the *East Indies*, leaving her and an only Daughter to struggle with every Degree of Wretchedness, which soon put an End to the unhappy Mother, who had scarce wherewithal to bury her, and the dear Infant was sent to the Parish. At this the Tears started into the Captain's Eyes. Go on, Madam, I find there are others as wretched as I am.

Mrs. *Worthy* continued her Discourse, and, not to tire the Reader, made a short but lively and pathetic Relation of all the Vicissitudes of Miss's Fortune, only substituting feigned Names, and dwelt with particular Emphasis on all her Sufferings, and the noble Fortitude she had displayed in every dismal Change of her Fortune.

And

And when she had done, and saw the Captain buried in the most profound Melancholy, Don't you imagine, Sir, continued she, that this unhappy young Creature deserved a better Fate, and that her Father is strangely infatuated, that he makes no Enquiry after her?

After a considerable Pause, occasioned by the Sorrow that oppressed him, the Captain replied, Yes, Madam, such Virtue as you have related, deserves a better Father. But oh, Madam, did you know what I feel from the affecting Narrative, you must think me the most wretched Man alive; for, bating Names, Madam, you have given my History, and represented to me all the Follies of my Youth, and given me a lively Image of the Miseries of old Age: For what can I expect, who had a Wife beyond what you have described Mrs. *Dickens*, who used her brutally, and left her and her Infant to the very Fate you have allotted the Lady you have been speaking of. But Mr. *Dickens* may still be happy if he is alive; he may find a Daughter an Honour to him and her Sex: But that Comfort is denied me; my Child is not to be heard of; and whatever is her Fate, it is only I am to blame.

The

The whole Company pitied the Agony he was in, and hastened to relieve him. Pray, Sir, says Mrs. *Morgan*, could you know your Daughter? I have, Madam, an Idea of her Mother so strongly in my Mind, whom she resembled when an Infant, that, unless her Features are strangely altered, I think I should know her; but that Resemblance deceived me in the young Lady I saw here some Days ago, so that I dare not trust my Senses. Yet sure my Soul longs for her with such Earnestness, that Sympathy must direct me to my Child if I saw her: But why that Question, Madam? Only a foolish Curiosity, replied the other; and rung the Bell for one of the Servants, whom she whispered to desire Mrs. *Bell* to come in, as if to deliver her some Message.

Mrs. *Bell* came in, and in passing to Mrs. *Morgan*, stopped full before the Captain, Good Heavens! said she, what do I see! My dear Master, Captain *Summers*! Don't you know *Bell*, your Lady's Maid? Know ye! yes, I do: Oh blessed Fortune! this cannot be Chance, it must be Providence, that has directed me to the only Person next to my Daughter, I wanted to see. Forgive this Rapture, Ladies; my Case admits no Ceremony. Oh tell me, dear *Bell*, at once, do

do you know where my Child *Charlotte* is ?
Speak quickly, and make a Father happy !
Compose yourself, Sir, replied the other ; I
do know, and you shall soon see her. Oh !
where, *Bell* ? Don't torture me with Delay !
if you knew the Agonies I feel, with what
Eagerness I burn to embrace that dear Pledge
of my youthful Felicity, you would speak
me into Happiness at once.

Go, Mrs. *Bell*, and desire Miss to come
down : Tell her she is to hear some News of
her Father. Be calm, Sir ; the young Lady
you saw here t'other Day, is your virtuous
Child. Excuse us, that we have kept you
in Suspence, we thought it necessary for
both your Safeties. Here the dear Crea-
ture comes.

The Captain starting from his Chair, as
she entered the Room, with wild Amaze-
ment in his Looks, running to her, and
catching her in his Arms : Yes ! it is she ! it
is my dear, my lost Child ! embracing and
gazing at her by Turns : The Mother's Face,
her Air, her Mien, and very Looks. Oh
Heavens ! this is too much to bear, my
Happiness is too supreme. The Life, the
Idol of my Soul ; all my Hopes, and the
Spring of all my Joys, at once in my Arms.
—But !

—But! What have I done? Oh she faints:
 —Look up, my *Charlotte*; it's your repent-
 ing Father calls you, and only lives to re-
 ceive Forgiveness of you, for all those Mi-
 series my Baseness heaped on you, and that
 blessed Angel your Mother. She recovered,
 and clung about his Neck, and bathed his
 Face with Tears; then recollecting herself,
 fell upon her Knees: Oh bless me, Sir, and
 confirm my Happiness; for tho' all is Mys-
 tery and Wonder, yet my Blood confesses
 its dear Original, and my Heart tells me I
 behold my Father. He blessed her, raised
 her to his Arms, and it was some time be-
 fore he could permit himself to reflect, that
 there was some Complaisance owing to the
 Company. At last mutual Compliments,
 and sincere Congratulations passed on all
 Hands; and the Mystery of the Name of
 Captain *Ainsworth* was explained to the over-
 joy'd Miss *Summers*.

I won't take up the Reader's Time, or
 detain him unnecessarily from what remains
 of the History, by repeating the Compli-
 ments and Acknowledgments that passed
 between Captain *Summers*, Mrs. *Morgan*,
 and Mrs. *Worthy*; a Reader of any tolerable
 Share of good Nature, or common good
 Breeding, may suppose that nothing was
 forgot,

forgot, proper to be said on such an Occasion.

The transacting of this interesting Scene took up most of the Evening, till Supper was served up ; and all this amiable Company, when it was time to part, joined in their Request to Captain *Summers*, that he would permit Miss to stay with them for some Days, which he the readier consented to, as it was necessary to make some Preparations for her Reception at his own House, which he had but lately fitted up, without Hopes that he should have such a Guest. But in about a Week she went home to her indulgent Parent, who soon put her in an Equipage suitable to the Fortune she had to expect.

C H A P.

C H A P. XI.

Containing, what few could expect, viz. an Account how Miss Summers, after all her great Struggles in Defence of her Virtue, went at last openly to Bed to a Man.

AFTER conducting my fair Parish Girl through various Distresses and Dangers, I have at last landed her safe at her Father's House to the Enjoyment of the utmost Prosperity and Grandeur. I think I had best leave her there, since she now enjoys as much as can possibly make a reasonable Woman happy. Oh, Pox! says Widow Lack-it, sure you won't give over without marrying her? It's impossible she can be happy without a Husband. Besides, it's contrary to all Rule to end a History of this Kind, without marrying the Hero and Heroine. Plague! I would not give a Rush for it without a Wedding-night. — It's monstrously hard, Widow, to please every body; and now the Parish Girl has grown a rich Heiress, and followed by a Regiment of Feathers, Ribbons, Titles, Coronets and powder'd Toopees, she has quite altered her Sentiments, and it's impossible for me to persuade her to make her Election out of the Croud of Admirers that dance after her. I

have been offered some Thousands for my Interest with her ; but I scorn to turn Match-maker ; and since both Mr. *Corbett* and I are already married, God help us, I had Thoughts of letting her take her Fling for a Year or two, till she could have known her own Mind better ; but since I find the Ladies are willing to have her quickly dispatched out of the Way, that they may have some of her cast-off Lovers, I must do my best to persuade old Lady *Bountiful*, to let it be a Match between her and her Son Sir *Thomas*, of whom we have heard no News this Year or two.

About three Months after the Discovery mentioned in the preceding Chapter, Captain *Summers* and his lovely Daughter were in their Chariot passing through *Pall-Mall*, and were detained some Time by a Gentleman's Coach, who stopped to speak to the Captain. In the Interim, a grave like Gentleman, very well dress'd, in passing over-against the Chariot, and casting his Eyes on Miss *Summers*, stopt short, and gazed with great Marks of Surprise in his Countenance. Miss observed him, and thought she knew him by the short Glimpse she had of him, for the Chariot drove off that Instant, and she lost Sight of him.

him. However, the Gentleman followed the Chariot with his Eye a good Way, and then took the first Hackney-Coach he met, and directed the Coachman to follow that Chariot wherever it went.

The Hackney was in Sight when the Captain stopped at his own House, and the Gentleman when he came up, asked the Coachman, who was still at the Door, who lived at that House? The Servant told him one Captain *Summers*, and that he and his Daughter had just now gone in. He immediately knocked at the Door, and desired to speak with Miss *Summers*, to whom he was immediately admitted. Her Father was in the Room, and was just going out, when Miss in a Rapture cried, Dear Sir, this is Dr. *Burton*! ran to him, and embraced him with great Tenderness; and turning to her Father, this, Sir, is one of the dearest Friends I have on Earth. You have heard me mention him; he is Steward to the good Lady *Bountiful*.—— Captain *Summers* received him with all possible Marks of Esteem. Mutual Compliments passed. Miss eagerly enquired after Lady *Bountiful* and her Family, of which the Doctor gave her the following Account.

I dare not mention, Madam, the Confusion into which your Flight plunged our Family, lest it should give you Pain. The Event, however, was, that Sir *Thomas*, after despairing of finding you, went with an Intention to make the Tour of *Europe*, and at parting with his Mother made a solemn Vow never to return while she lived, or till she gave her Consent for his Marriage with you, in case you should be found out. The Parting was melancholy beyond Description; and our Travels, for I accompanied Sir *Thomas*, was far from mitigating that Sorrow which haunted my Pupil, and in about two Years threw him into a Disorder that had all the Symptoms of a Consumption. I was much alarmed at the Situation, and made for *Lisbon* as fast as possible, where I expected the Serenity of the Air would be of Service to him. I thought it my Duty to acquaint Lady *Bountiful* with the dangerous Situation of her Son's Health, which alarmed that tender Mother to so great a Degree, that she herself arrived at *Lisbon* before I could possibly have Answers of the Letters sent her. We had been then near three Months at *Lisbon*, without observing any Alteration in Sir *Thomas*, unless it were for the worse. The Physicians declared, his Malady proceeded from some Uneasiness in
his

his Mind, which neither Air nor Medicine could have any Effect upon, and in few Words desired us to prepare for the worst. Sir *Thomas* (as it would have been Cruelty to conceal his Danger) received the News with a Kind of Joy, which was surprizing in a Person of his Years, and seemed rather to court than avoid Death. But the good Lady his Mother was inconsolable ; she certainly would have sunk under the Weight of her Sorrow, if the Desire she had of ministering to her darling Son while he lived, had not in some Sort made her Agonies tolerable. She proposed to him returning to his own Country, in Hopes that his native Air might work a Change. But he told her, No, Madam, your Will and my Vows have barr'd me the Hopes of dying in the Mansion of my Forefathers, nor do I know if it is even proper to send my Bones there. — It is easy to imagine the Effect this Answer had on the unhappy Lady. She quitted the Room, and cursed her Pride a thousand Times, which she said had undone her darling Son. I happened to go in just as she was in this melancholy Situation, and told her perhaps it was not yet too late to rectify an Error that had its Foundation in her Regard to her Son's Honour, by promising to consent to a Marriage which it is possible

10 P 3 may

may never be claimed. She took the Hint immediately, and returned to her Son, told him she had repented opposing his Match with Miss *Summers*, but if he would prepare to venture to *England*, she would spend all she had in Search of the fair Fugitive, and consent to their Union as soon as found.

A Reprieve from the most ignominious Death could not be more welcome to a Criminal on the Rack; a Voice from Heaven proclaiming Health, Pardon and Happiness could not produce so great a Transport, as this Speech did in Sir *Thomas*. He grew almost frantick with Joy, and in less than a Fortnight recovered a sound State of Health, and with Impatience waited for the Packet, that he might return to *England*, in Search of the sole Object of his Happiness.

We have been landed about a Month in *London*, in which neither Time, Pains, nor Money has been spared either by the Baronet or his Mother to find you out; but we had no Hopes till this Morning, when Sir *Thomas* came Home in the highest Extacy, and told Lady *Bountiful* that he had met Mr. *Worthy*, a Gentleman of *Carmarthenshire*, who gave him almost an absolute Promise, that in two
or

or three Days he should hear where you were; but, thank God! Madam, I can give him more early Intelligence, unless you have any Reasons to keep it longer a Secret.

Miss, who had listened to the Doctor with great Attention, and felt every tender Emotion on Account of what Sir *Thomas* suffered on her Account, made no Reply to the Doctor, but looked at her Father, and blushed as red as Scarlet. You need not blush, said the indulgent Parent, your Lover, *Charlotte*, deserves your tenderest Acknowledgements; you have deserved each other, and you may inform Sir *Thomas* when you please, that a Father's Blessing shall not be wanting to Crown his Happiness, with his newly-recovered Mistress.

Just as he had done speaking Mr. *Worthy* entered, who came to consult with Captain *Summers* how far it was proper to perform his Promise with the Baronet; and that Affair being before settled with the Doctor, he and that Gentleman went immediately to communicate the joyful Tidings, and Miss went up to dress, in order to receive her much-loved Sir *Thomas*.

When Mr. *Worthy* and the Doctor arrived at Lady *Bountiful's*, they found that Lady and her Son in pretty warm Debate upon the Subject of his intended Marriage with Miss *Summers*. The good Lady, who now saw her Son perfectly recovered of his Illness, in some Measure repented of the Promise she had made to give her Consent to an Alliance so disagreeable to her natural Inclination ; and though she did not intend to forfeit her Promise, yet she was endeavouring to argue her Son out of his Attachment to that Match, which Sir *Thomas* could not bear with any Degree of Patience. The natural Impetuosity of his Temper, had rendered the Dispute pretty warm, when the Gentlemen entered, which Mr. *Worthy* observing, told Lady *Bountiful*, that he was come on Purpose to give her such an Account of Miss *Summers*, as would remove every possible Objection she could have to her Son's Marriage with that matchless young Lady, and had no Doubt but that she would find in Miss *Summers* every Qualification which she could wish for in a Daughter-in-Law.

On this Occasion Mr. *Worthy*, who was perfectly acquainted with the Particulars of her

her Story, since she left *Bounty-Park*, gave a brief, but moving Recapitulation of the various Hardships that lovely Wanderer had suffered, with her steady Adherence to Virtue and Honour, amidst the strongest Temptations of Want and Distress; and concluded it with an Account of the Manner of her Father's discovering her, having enlarged copiously upon the Article of Captain *Summers* being the next Heir to the Lord Viscount *F——*, and possessed of an immense personal Estate, which with the Titles must descend to the Heirs of the intended Marriage.

Lady *Bountiful* was highly touched with the Distress of the fair Fugitive, and the more so, that in every Scene she saw herself the only Cause of all her Sufferings, and sincerely rejoiced in her Change of Fortune, which she could not help owning, rendered her a Match much superior to any thing Sir *Thomas* had any Claim to. But the Effect Mr. *Worthy's* Narrative had on Lady *Bountiful*, was nothing when compared to the various Emotions it kindled in a Lover's Breast. He felt all her Woes, and was ready to faint under the Anguish of her Sorrows, and every Faculty of his Soul was dilated with rapturous Joy to find that she had
 escaped

escaped them all, and in such a Manner as to oblige even the Lady *Bountiful* to own that she honoured him in accepting of his Alliance.

But cruelly kind Mr. *Worthy*, added the enraptured Baronet, how could you keep me so long in Suspence? How could you conceal from me a Thing on which my very Being depended? Why don't you let me know at once where I can find my adored *Charlotte*, that I may pour out my Soul before that lovely Wanderer? For Heaven's Sake don't keep me longer in Torture! I shall grow mad with Impatience unless I see her soon.—I promised you, returned Mr. *Worthy*, this Morning to give you some Account of her in two or three Days; however, by the Doctor's Means, I have got Permission to introduce you to Captain *Summers* this Afternoon; he has the Disposal of his Daughter, and its possible he may indulge you with a Sight of her.

Sir *Thomas*'s Joy on this Intimation of his Happiness being so near, was beyond the Poet's Rapture, and beyond the Imagination of any Man but he who has experienced the soul-dilating Power of a virtuous Passion. He was almost frantic with Joy,
and

and did a thousand Things, which some Men would have thought the Effects of real Madness. He made a hasty and irregular Dinner, looked at his Watch twenty Times in a Quarter of an Hour: At last five o'Clock, the Hour appointed, came, and he, Mr. *Worthy* and the Doctor took Coach for Captain *Summers's*.

The Captain received Sir *Thomas* with all possible Marks of Esteem and Affection, which the amorous Baronet would have returned with Expressions full of the tenderest Regard; but he had no sooner entered the House, which contained his long lost *Charlotte*, and saluted the Father of his adored Mistress, than all his Spirits were in a Flutter, his Speech faltered, and he found himself in an unaccountable Confusion; which the Captain observing, and willing to put a Period to his Anxiety, cut the first Compliments short, and told Sir *Thomas*, he believed from what he had heard from the Gentleman present, that he could not give a greater Proof of the Esteem he had for the Son of Lady *Bountiful*, than by introducing him to one who owed more to that Lady than to him her Parent; and desired that he would be pleased to step into the next Room. The Captain ushered him
into

into the Room where *Charlotte* was sitting, and on Entrance told her he brought a Gentleman to visit her, whom it was her Duty to receive with all possible Respect, and then hastily withdrew, shutting the Door after him, as judging an Interview of that Kind would be best conducted without Witnesses.

The lovely Miss *Summers*, on seeing Sir *Thomas* enter, rose from her Chair to receive him. Tho' she expected him, yet on Sight of the much-loved Object, a Tumult of various Ideas heaved her charming Bosom, a crimson Blush overspread her lovely Face, and a pearly Drop hovered on her Eyes, a thrilling Tremor seized all her Frame, and she was ready to sink, when the Baronet, not less moved with the ravishing Joy, eagerly caught her in his Arms, and tenderly embracing her, attempted to rouse her drooping Spirits oppressed with tumultuous Pleasure.

He would have spoke, but Wonder, Joy and Amazement stopped his Utterance; he thought her all lovely, all charming when he last saw her at *Bounty-Park*; and since that, his Imagination, always full of that dear Idea, had represented her to his ravish-
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ed Fancy, in all the Pomp of Youth and Beauty ; yet the Idea he had formed, fell so far short of the Original now before his Eyes, that he was lost in extatic Wonder, and, speechless, gazed on her matchless Charms now arrived at their full Perfection, adorned with every female Grace, which a long Acquaintance with the polite World had given her, and heightened by the Circumstances of their meeting free from every Check that could cloud the Prospect of an eternal Union. Who would not have been ravished to find in his Embraces, so much Youth, so much Beauty, adorned with such conspicuous Virtue after so tedious a Separation ? He must have been less or more than Man, that could have bore the thrilling Bliss, without dissolving into unutterable Extacy. He led her back to her Chair, and seated himself by her, holding one of her Hands, on which he imprinted a thousand Kisses, but wanted Words to express the Fullness of his Heart. They passed some Minutes in this silent Rapture, when at last the ravished Baronet found his Speech. Good Heavens I thank thee, cried he in a Rapture, thou hast at last compensated all my Sufferings, and in this Moment has given me a Taste of Felicity beyond mortal Conception. To see the lovely
ly

ly Fugitive, to hold her thus and gaze upon those matchless Beauties, is worth an Age of Pain. There is but one Thing wanting to compleat my Bliss, to know that my *Charlotte* has some Pleasure, in this long wished-for Meeting. Speak my Angel, and confirm my Felicity, by owning that the Sight of one for whom you have undergone so much, gives you some Pleasure; own my *Charlotte* the pleasing Truth, and let not that stubborn Virtue of yours dash my dawning Joys. Why that Silence, why that Blush, why turn away those lovely Eyes, is it so much I ask? but to hear you speak and bless me with the Sound, that my Presence is not disagreeable to you. Far from it, replied the blushing Maid, I should be basely ungrateful indeed, if the Sight of one to whose Family I owe so much, did not give me great Satisfaction.—Still harping on the cold Theme of Gratitude; I know it my lovely *Charlotte*, you have had enough, nay too much of that frozen Virtue, but may not I hope that some Part of your Satisfaction takes its Rise from a tenderer Motive; is there nothing due to all my anxious Nights and weary Hours to a Passion that has no Bounds, and to those Vows that first warmed your Virgin Heart. Were it possible for you but to imagine the racking
Pain.

Pain and Agonies of Soul I have hourly felt, since last I saw you, you would certainly, out of Compassion, own that I had suffered enough, and that the most rigid Virtue would authorize giving me some Hope, that you would not stand in the Way of my Bliss, since all other Obstacles are removed; speak my *Charlotte* and compleat my Happiness, or tell me what else I must suffer to merit a small Return of Love. I see by this cold Indifference I have not yet ended all my Sufferings, and that I must do more to expiate the many Misfortunes to which my Passion has exposed my lovely Charmer; tell me, thou dear virtuous Maid, what I must do to blot out the Remembrance of these Wrongs you suffered on my Account. Oh *Charlotte*, they were many, they were cruelly severe, and I, only I was to blame, my whole Life is but too short to expiate your Sufferings; point out but the Way, and all my Faculties shall be employed to give you Satisfaction. Don't torment yourself, replied the lovely *Charlotte*, with what I suffered, it was the Will of Providence, that I should suffer, and I am far from regretting it, since by it I have been confirmed in the Paths of Honour, and have learned the intrinsic Excellence of a steady Virtue. We
have

have had each our Share, Sir *Thomas*, of Adversity, the Storm is blown over, and we must now only think of what is passed, to give a Relish to present and future Felicity. I am far from wishing you to suffer more on my Account, and wish I had bore the Shock alone, without involving you and your Family in so much Uneasiness on my Account—Yet still, interrupted Sir *Thomas*, you are silent, my fair Philosopher, in the main Point, you make no Answer to my Passion, and only wish me to suffer no more, while your Coldness is worse than all I have hitherto endured, for till I saw you, I still had Hopes, that I had some Share in your Affection, and that nothing but your rigid Regard to Lady *Bountiful* hindered you from owning the soul-ravishing Truth; and yet when that Obstacle is removed, I find my lovely Charmer averse to compleat my Bliss—What would you have me say, replied the blushing Virgin, I am now, Sir *Thomas*, under a Parent's Authority, whose Tenderneſs merits every Return of Duty. It is not impossible but he may authorize your Suit; if he does, what Virtue can demand a Passion so generous and constant as yours may expect. These last Words raised Sir *Thomas* to the highest Pinacle of Bliss, he was once more silent with Joy, and im-

printed

printed his Acknowledgement on her Hand, which he now and then pressed with eager Fondness to his panting Bosom. It would be tedious perhaps to the Reader to repeat all the fond Things that passed on this Occasion, the greatest Part may very well be imagined. When Captain *Summers* judged that the first Tumult of the fond Interview was passed, he brought the Doctor and Mr. *Worthy* to join the loving Pair, by whose Eyes they could easy learn the Satisfaction they enjoy'd in each other's Company.

Sir *Thomas* staid pretty late, and returned Home full of the Idea of his approaching Happiness. In a few Days the Preliminaries to the Marriage were settled, and it now depended on Miss to fix the happy Minute. Sir *Thomas* waited on her for that Purpose, but he could not bring her to a Resolution; she would have put it off for a Month or two, which appeared to him as so many Ages; in short, his Impatience could not put up with the Delay. He made Interest with Mrs. *Worthy* to persuade her into more reasonable Terms, who found Means to reduce the Months to Weeks. The happy Day at last arrived. The Marriage was solemnized, at which were present all the principle Persons we have spoke of, who
were

were overjoyed to see so much Virtue and Constancy so justly rewarded.

Sir *Thomas* and his lovely Spouse staid a Month or two in Town, till Captain *Summers* could settle his Affairs for a Removal, and then he and they accompanied the good old Lady to *Bounty-Park*, where they all lived in the greatest Harmony and Happiness for several Years, till Death by Degrees stole them at an advanced Age from each other.

F I N I S.



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